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THE MONKS OF THE WEST

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THE

MONKS OF THE WEST

FROM ST BENEDICT TO ST BERNARD

BY

THE COUNT DE MONTALEMBERT

MEMBER OF THE FRENCH ACADEMY

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FIDE ET VERITATE

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DILECTISSIMO ANTISTITUM,

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QUI,

AD ECCLESIÆ PERICULA PRÆCIPUUS,

PRO SALUTE ANIMARUM,

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PRO CHRISTIANÆ CONSCIENTIÆ INTEGRITATE AC DIGNITATE,

TANTA CUM LAUDE TAMDIU MILITAVIT;

QUI,

JUSTITIÆ ET AMICITIÆ

IN UTRAQUE FORTUNA TENACISSIMUS,

TOT INTER ET TANTOS LABORES

LABOREM HUNC

TAM VIGILANTER ET STRENUE

FOVIT;

HOCCE VOLUMEN,

POST XL. FERE COMMILITII ANNOS

D. D. D.

CAROLUS COMES DE MONTALEMBERT.

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ERRATA.

Page 28, line 11, *for* "lords," *read* "eorls."
,, 106, ,, 5 of note, *for* "parentibus," *read* "faventibus;" *and for* "adherentibus," *read* "adnuentibus."
,, 114, ,, 11, *for* "earls," *read* "eorls."
,, 364, ,, 22, *for* "claims," *read* "claim."
,, 412, ,, 10, *after* "blood," *insert* "of Ethelfrid."
,, 429, ,, 4, *for* "Durham," *read* "Hexham."

BOOK XI.

THE CELTIC MONKS AND THE ANGLO-SAXONS.

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

CHAPTER I.

ST OSWALD AND THE REVIVAL OF CHRISTIANITY IN NORTHUMBRIA.

The Celtic monks revive, in Northumbria, the work of conversion abandoned by the Roman monks.—Oswald, son of Ethelfrid the Ravager, an exile among the Scots, is baptised according to the Celtic rite.—He returns to Northumbria, plants there the first cross, and gains the battle of Denisesburn over the Mercians and Britons.—He reigns over the whole of Northumbria, and makes it the predominant power in the Anglo-Saxon Confederation.—His desire to convert his kingdom to Christ.—The Italian deacon, James, keeps Christianity alive in Deïra; but in Bernicia everything has yet to be.—Oswald begs for missionaries from the Celtic monasteries.—Failure of the first missionary from Iona: he is succeeded by Aïdan.—Bede's Eulogy of the Abbots of Iona.—The religious capital of the north of England is fixed in the monastic isle of Lindisfarne: description of that island: its resemblance to Iona.—Authority of the abbots of Lindisfarne even over the bishops.—Virtues of the monk-bishop Aïdan: his disinterestedness: his care of children and slaves.—King Oswald acts as assistant and interpreter to the missionary Aïdan.—Oswald marries the daughter of the King of Wessex, and converts his father-in-law.—Note regarding the local and provincial opposition of the monks of Bardeney.—War with Penda, chief of the coalition of the Britons and Mercians.—Battle of Maserfeld: Oswald is killed there at the age of thirty-eight.—Venerated as a martyr.—Miracles wrought at his tomb. Prediction of Bishop Aïdan with regard to his hand.

THE work of conversion among the English, though interrupted in the south by a pagan reaction, and buried, on the north, in the overthrow of the first

Christian king of Northumbria, was to undergo but a momentary eclipse—the providential prelude of a more sustained effort and decisive triumph. The spiritual conquest of the island, abandoned for a time by the Roman missionaries, was now about to be taken up by the Celtic monks. The Italians had made the first step, and the Irish now appeared to resume the uncompleted work. What the sons of St Benedict could only begin, was to be completed by the sons of St Columba. The great heart of the first abbot of Iona, inspiring his spiritual descendants, was thus to accomplish the noble design of the holy Gregory. The spirit of unity, submission, and discipline, was to be instilled into their minds, somewhat against their will, by Wilfrid, a Saxon convert; and their unwearied activity and invincible perseverance were destined to triumph over every obstacle, stimulating and seconding the zeal of the Italian missionaries and reviving the sacred fire amongst the Benedictine monks, into whose ranks they finally fell. Thus wrought upon, moulded and penetrated on every side by monastic influence, the whole nation of the Anglo-Saxons was soon to acknowledge the law of Christ. Its kings, its monks, its bishops and saints, were to take a foremost place among the children of the Church, the civilisers of Europe, the benefactors of mankind, and the soldiers of the Cross. The history of this transformation we shall attempt to set forth in the narrative which follows.

Forty-eight years after Augustine and his Roman monks landed on the shores of pagan England, an Anglo-Saxon prince invoked the aid of the monks of Iona in the conversion of the Saxons of the north.

This prince was Oswald, son of Ethelfrid the Ravager, and of the sister of the martyred King Edwin. After the defeat and death of his father, the son of the great enemy and conqueror of the Scots had, while yet a child, sought a refuge, along with his brothers and a numerous train of young nobles, among the Scots themselves. He there found the same generous hospitality which, twelve centuries later, the descendants of the Anglo-Saxons showed to the French princes, descendants of a race continually and gloriously hostile to England. In that exile he passed the seventeen years of the reign of his uncle Edwin, as Edwin himself had lived in exile during the reign of his brother-in-law and persecutor Ethelfrid. But between these two representatives of the two dynasties which divided Northumbria, and succeeded each other in the sovereignty, there was this difference, that the young Edwin had sought and found an asylum among his pagan fellow-countrymen; while the banishment of Oswald led him into intercourse with people of a race and religion differing from his own. Since the apostolate of Columba, the Scots and Picts had become entirely Christian; and among them Oswald and his companions in mis-

Oswald, son of the King of Northumbria, an exile with the Scots.

fortune learned the truths of Christianity, and were all baptised, but according to the rite of the Celtic Church, which differed from the Roman.[1]

He is baptised according to the Celtic rite.

After the overthrow of Edwin and the Deïrian dynasty, of which he was the head, the princes of the Bernician family returned to Northumbria, from which they had been banished for seventeen years.[2]

The elder, Eanfrid, as has been stated, fell by the sword of the Briton Cadwallon, after having renounced the Christian faith. But his younger brother Oswald was a man of a very different stamp. At the head of a small but resolute band, of whom a dozen at most were Christians like himself, he undertook to reconquer his country, and did not hesitate to carry on the struggle against the immense forces of the formidable Briton, nor even to attack him in pitched battle.

He undertakes to reconquer Northumbria from the British.

The two armies, so unequal in numbers, met near that great wall which the Emperor Severus had erected from sea to sea to keep back the Picts,

[1] "Filii præfati regis . . . cum magna nobilium juventute apud Scotos sive Pictos exulabant ibique ad doctrinam Scotorum catechizati et baptismatis sunt gratia recreati."— BEDE, iii. 1.

Fleury, Lanigan, and many other historians, have supposed that these expressions of Bede applied to the Irish, who, as we have seen above, bore the name of Scots long before that name had been communicated, by an Irish colony, to the inhabitants of Caledonia. But no valid proof is to be found in ancient authors to confirm this supposition.

[2] To help the reader to find his way through the labyrinth of the two Northumbrian dynasties, the history of which, here begun, will be largely followed up in this volume, we add, in Appendix I., a genealogical table, to which he will do well to make frequent reference.

and which divided Northumbria into two nearly equal parts. This rampart, which had neither restrained the Picts in their invasions of the south, nor the Saxons in their conquests to the north, was then, though not intact, still standing; as indeed even now its vast remains may be traced on the steep hill-tops and uplands, covered with heath or strewn with basalt rocks, which give to that district of England an aspect so different from that of her ordinary landscapes. Flanked by a fragment of the Roman wall, the Anglo-Saxon prince occupied a height where his feeble forces could defy the attack of the numerous battalions of Cadwallon.[1] On that height, which was afterwards called *Heaven's Field*,[2] and which still bears the name of St Oswald, on the eve of the day of decisive battle, the young and ardent warrior held erect with his own hands a large wooden cross, which had been hastily made by his orders, while his companions heaped the earth round it, to keep it firm in its position; then prostrating himself

Oswald plants the first cross in Bernicia on the eve of the battle with the British.

[1] See for the description of the battle-field a recent publication of the learned society which, under the name of a famous archæologist, Surtees, has for thirty years devoted itself to bringing to light the monuments of Northumbrian history, viz., *The Priory of Hexham*, edited by James Raine, 1864; vol. i., preface, page xi., and app. ii.

[2] "Vocatur locus ille in lingua Anglorum *Hefenfelth*, quod dici potest latine Cœlestis Campus."—Bede, iii. 1. A chapel dedicated to St Oswald marks the spot so well described by Bede, near the small town of the same name, a little to the north of Hexham and of the railway from Newcastle to Carlisle. The battle is known by the name of *Denisesburn*, from the brook on the bank of which the British king perished in his flight.

before it, he said to his brothers in arms, "Let us all fall on our knees, and together implore the living and true and Almighty God in His mercy to defend us against the pride and fierceness of our enemy; for that God knows our cause is just, and that we fight for the salvation of our nation. Yes, it is for our salvation and our freedom that we must fight to-day against those Britons, whom our fathers gloried in challenging, but who now prophesy the extirpation of our race."[1]

The Britons themselves might seem to have an equal right to offer this prayer, for they had long been Christians, and after all had only retaken their native soil from the grasp of foreign invaders.[2] But a century of possession had given the latter a conviction of their right; and the bloody cruelties of Cadwallon had dishonoured his patriotism. Oswald, moreover, represented the cause of advancing Christianity; for the Britons did nothing to con-

[1] "Fertur quia facta cruce citato opere ac fovea præparata, ipse fide fervens hanc arripuerit ac foveæ imposuerit, atque utraque manu erectam tenuerit, donec, adgesto a militibus pulvere, terræ figeretur. . . . Flectamus omnes genua et Dominum omnipotentem vivum ac verum in commune deprecemur, ut nos ab hoste superbo et feroce sua miseratione defendat; scit enim ipse quia justa pro salute gentis nostræ bella suscepimus."—BEDE, iii. 2. The more recent historians throw especial light on the patriotic side of this struggle. "Exprobrandi pudoris rem ventilari allegans, Anglos cum Britannis tam iniquo marte confligere, ut contra illos pro salute decertarent quos ultro *pro gloria* consueverunt lacessere. Itaque pro libertate audentibus animis et viribus effusis decertarent, nihil de fuga meditantes: tali modo et illis provenire gloriam et annuente Deo patriæ libertatem. . . . Cædwallum, virum, ut ipse dictitabat, in exterminium Anglorum natum."—WILH. MALMESB., i. 44; RICARD. DE CIRENC., *Spect. Hist. de Gest. Reg. Angl.*, ii. 36.

[2] A. DE LA BORDERIE, *Lutte des Britons Insulaires*, p. 221.

vert their enemies, and the cross which he planted was the first which had been as yet seen in Bernicia.

Apparition of St Columba to Oswald.

On the evening of the same day, and during the night which preceded the contest which was to fix his destiny, Oswald, asleep in his tent, saw in a dream the holy St Columba, the apostle and patron of the country of his exile and of the Church in which he had received his baptism. The warlike abbot of Iona, who had been dead for thirty-six years, appeared to him, shining with an angelic beauty; erect, and with that lofty stature that distinguished him in life, he stood and stretched his resplendent robe over the whole of the small army of exiles as if to protect it; then addressing the prince, he said, as God said to Joshua before the passage of the Jordan, "Be of good courage and play the man. At the break of day march to the battle: I have obtained for thee from God the victory over thine enemies and the death of tyrants: thou shalt conquer, and reign." The prince, on awaking, told his vision to the Saxons who had joined him, and all promised to receive baptism, like himself and the twelve companions of his exile, if he should return a conqueror.[1] Early on the morrow the battle began,

Battle of Denisesburn.

[1] "Pridie . . . in suo papilione supra pulvillum dormiens, sanctum Columbam in visu videt forma coruscantem angelica; cujus alta proceritas vertice nubes tangere videbatur . . . suum regi proprium revelans nomen, in medio castrorum stans, excepta quadam parva extremitate, sui protegebat fulgida veste. . . . Confortare et age viriliter, ecce ego tecum: hac

and Oswald gained a victory as complete as it was unlikely. Cadwallon, the last hero of the British race—victor, according to the Welsh tradition, in forty battles and in sixty single combats—perished in this defeat. The Britons evacuated Northumbria never to return, and withdrew behind the Severn. Those who remained to the north of the Dee, in the territory which has since been divided into the counties of Chester, Lancaster, and Westmoreland, submitted to the Northumbrian sway, which henceforth extended from the Irish Channel to the North Sea, tracing the line of the east coast as far as Edinburgh. There still remained, however, out of Wales and to the south of the wall of Severus, in the region adjoining Caledonia, a district bathed by the waters of the Solway, full of lakes and hills like Caledonia itself, and then, as now, known by the name of Cumbria or Cumberland, where the Britons continued independent, relying on the support of the Scots, and in alliance with the people of their own race who dwelt on the banks of the Clyde. But they fell, and, though subdued, agreed in bestowing upon the son of the Ravager—the grandson of the Burner—the Saxon

Defeat and death of Cadwallon.

sequente nocte de castris ad bellum procede ; hac enim vice mihi Dominus donavit ut hostes in fugam vertantur tui. . . . Totus populus promittit se post reversionem de bello crediturum et baptismum susceperunt, nam tota illa Saxonia gentilitatis et ignorantiæ tenebris obscurata erat, excepto ipso rege Oswaldo, cum duodecim viris, qui cum eo Scotos inter exulante, baptizati sunt."—ADAMNAN, *Vita S. Columbæ*, v. 1. He obtained this fact from his predecessor at Iona, the Abbot Failbe, who had heard it told by Oswald himself to the fifth abbot of Iona.

who had nobly vanquished them, the name of *Lamn-Gwinn;* which means, according to some, "the Shining Sword," according to others, "the Liberal Hand."[1]

Oswald makes the two Northumbrian kingdoms into one, which becomes the leading power among the Anglo-Saxons.

Nothing is known of the course of events which, after the defeat and death of the great British chief, confirmed Oswald in the undisputed sovereignty of the whole of Northumbria and the temporary supremacy of the entire Saxon Heptarchy; but we find him entitled Emperor of all Britain, by a writer almost contemporary with himself.[2] Not only, says Bede, had he learned to possess in hope the heavenly kingdom which his forefathers knew not; but in this world God gave him a kingdom vaster than that possessed by any of his ancestors. He reigned over the four races who shared Britain among them—the Britons, the Scots, the Picts, and the Angles.[3] No doubt this supremacy was but partially acknowledged, especially beyond the limits of the Anglo-Saxon territory; but Northumbria, when united under one king, could not fail to become at once the chief power of the confederation. Oswald, who was the great-grandson of Ina on his father's side, and grandson of Ella on his

635-642.

[1] A. DE LA BORDERIE, *op. cit.* LAPPENBERG, p. 157.

[2] Cumineus, half a century prior to Bede, says, in his *Life of Columba*, c. 25—"Totius Britanniæ imperator a Deo ordinatur."

[3] "Non solum incognita progenitoribus suis regna cœlorum sperare didicit; sed et . . . omnes provincias et nationes Britanniæ, quæ in quatuor linguas, id est Britonum, Pictorum, Scotorum, et Anglorum, divisæ sunt, in ditione accepit."—BEDE, iii. 6.

mother's,[1] had a natural right to unite the two realms of Deïra and Bernicia, while at the same time delivering them from the humiliating and bloody yoke of the Britons and Mercians. He seems to have had a special affection for Bernicia, his father's country, in which he lived, and whose ancient boundaries on the Caledonian side he extended or re-established. But he succeeded, we are told by the Northumbrian Bede, in reconciling and binding into one state the two tribes which, although of the same race, had lived in continual conflict. He made of the two a real nation.[2]

He is the sixth Bretwalda.

Oswald was the sixth of the great chiefs or suzerains of the confederation who bore the title of *Bretwalda*,[3] before whom was carried the *tufa*, or tuft of feathers, which was the emblem of supreme authority, and which after this was used by none save by the Northumbrian kings. It is

[1] See the genealogical table, Appendix I.

[2] "Hujus industria regis, Deirorum et Berniciorum provinciæ, quæ eatenus ab invicem discedebant, in unam sunt pacem et velut unum compaginatæ in populum."—*Hist. Eccles.*, iii. 6.

[3] The list of the Bretwaldas as given by Bede (ii. 5) may be quoted here :—

560. Ella, King of the South Saxons.
579. Peawlin, King of the West Saxons.
596. Ethelbert, King of the Jutes of Kent.
616. Redwald, King of the East Angles.
630. Edwin, King of the Northumbrians, or Northern Angles.
635. Oswald, King of the Northumbrians.
642. Oswy, King of the Northumbrians.

To this list Lappenberg thinks should be added the name of Wulphere, King of the Mercians, or Angles of the Middle, from 656 to 675.

supposed that this dignity was conferred or ratified by the suffrage, not only of all the kings of the Heptarchy, but also of the principal chiefs or barons of each tribe. It was at first exclusively military; but it became under Oswald and his successors, as it had already been with Ethelbert of Kent, a means of exercising great influence in religious matters. For Oswald was not only a true king and a gallant soldier, but also a good Christian, destined to become a saint; and in the power with which he found himself invested he saw chiefly the means of defending and propagating the faith which he had received with his baptism from the hands of the sons of Columba.

As soon as Oswald was established on his father's throne, his first and dearest thought was to bring back and to procure the triumph in his own country of that religion which had been the consolation of his exile. For this end missionaries, ministers of the word of God, were necessary above all things. It did not occur to him to seek them in the Church of Canterbury, the monastic centre which already existed on English soil, and whence ten years before had come Paulinus, the first apostle of Northumbria. He does not seem to have even thought of the noble and worthy Roman deacon, James, whom Paulinus, on abandoning his metropolitan see of York, had left alone behind him; and who, remaining gallantly at his post during the storm of invasion and havoc, had continued to

Oswald seeks missionaries from the Celtic monasteries.

The deacon James.

baptise and preach, and to snatch his prey from the old enemy.[1] This deacon, however, was the lieutenant of a bishop to some extent identified with the Deïrian dynasty, and the family of King Edwin, which had exiled, robbed, and supplanted the family of Oswald, and which he had just supplanted in his turn. Was it for this reason, as has been supposed,[2] that Oswald sought no aid from the Roman missionaries? Is it not more natural to conclude that he was chiefly influenced by his remembrance of the generous hospitality which he had found among the Scots, and of the instructions of those from whom in early manhood he received baptism and the other sacraments of the Church? Be this as it may, it was to the Scotic Church that he addressed himself—that is to say, to the heads of monasteries ruled by the traditions and institutions of Columba, that great abbot of Iona who appeared to him in his dream the night before the decisive battle, to promise him victory and a crown.[3]

Under the influence of that Celtic patriotism which inflamed the Britons against the conquering

[1] "Virum utique industrium ac nobilem in Christo et Ecclesia . . . virum utique ecclesiasticum et sanctum, qui multo ex hinc tempore in ecclesia manens, magnas antiquo hosti prædas, docendo et baptizando, eripuit."—Bede, ii. 16, 20.

[2] Varin.—Faber, *Life of St Oswald.*

[3] "Mox ubi regnum suscepit, desiderans to tamgentem Christianæ fidei gratia imbui. . . . Misit ad majores natos Scotorum, inter quos exsulans ipse baptismatis sacramenta cum his qui secum erant militibus, consecutus erat, petens, ut cujus doctrina ac ministerio gens quam regebat Anglorum dominicæ fidei et dona disceret et susciperet sacramenta."—Bede, iii. 3.

strangers, and which was no less unwilling to concede to them a share in eternal salvation than in the British soil, the Scotic or Irish Church seems up to this time to have refrained from all effort to spread the Gospel among the Saxons. But the time had come to adopt a different course. As though it had only awaited the signal given by Oswald, the Celtic Church, aided by the brave missionaries who sprang from that monastic reformation of which Iona was the centre, immediately began to light up with its radiance the whole northern region of Saxon Britain, from whence it went on into the territory where it had been preceded by the Roman missionaries, and where the two apostolic agencies finally met.[1]

The Scottish monks replied with heartiness to the appeal of the exile, now a conqueror and sovereign. But the first effort of their zeal was not fortunate. Their first representative seems to have been animated by that spirit of pedantic rigour, by that stubborn and intolerant austerity, which have often shown themselves in the national character of the Scots along with Christian devotion and self-denial, and which culminated in the too celebrated Puritans. This missionary, by name Corman, attempted in vain to preach the Gospel to the Northumbrians, who heard him with opposition and dislike. After some time he returned to Iona; and in rendering an account of his

Failure of the first Scottish missionary.

[1] VARIN, Deuxième Mémoire, p. 9.

mission to those who had sent him—that is to say, to the elders of the monastery—he declared that he could make nothing of the Angles, that they were a race of untamable savages, and of a stubborn and barbarous spirit. This report greatly disquieted and perplexed the fathers of the synod, who ardently desired to impart to the English people the gift of salvation which had been asked from them.[1] They deliberated for a long time, until at length one of the assembly, Aïdan, a monk of Iona, said to the discomfited preacher, "It seems to me, my brother, that you have been too hard upon these ignorant people: you have not, according to the apostolic counsel, offered them first the milk of gentle doctrine, to bring them by degrees, while nourishing them with the divine Word, to the true understanding and practice of the more advanced precepts."[2] At these words every eye was turned to Aïdan: his opinion was thoughtfully discussed, and the debate ended in an acknowledgment that he was the man wanted for the mission, since he was endowed with that discernment which is the source of all virtues. There was, as we have seen,

[1] "Austerioris animi vir qui cum . . . prædicans nihil proficeretur, nec libenter a populo audiretur . . . in conventu seniorum retulerit, quia nil prodesse docendo genti . . . potuisset, eo quod essent homines indomabiles, et duræ ac barbaræ mentis. . . . At illi . . . tractatum magnum in concilio quid esset agendum, habere cœperunt, desiderantes quidem genti quam petebant solutem esse, sed de non recepto prædicatore dolentes."—BEDE, iii. 5.

[2] "Lac mollioris doctrinæ . . . donec paulatim enutriti verbo Dei, ad capienda perfectiora et ad facienda sublimiora Dei præcepta sufficerent."

a bishop in the Monastery of Iona, so that Aïdan was at once consecrated missionary and bishop of Northumbria.[1] He is succeeded by Aïdan.

He received his mission from the whole brotherhood and from the Abbot of Iona, Seghen, the fourth successor of Columba in the monastic metropolis of the Hebrides, the fourth of these great monks to whom Bede himself, somewhat prejudiced as he was against their holy founder, could not refuse the testimony that they were as illustrious for their self-denial as for their love of God and of strict monastic order. The venerable historian could find but one grievance wherewith to charge them and their delegate Aïdan—viz., their fidelity to Celtic observances as to the celebration of Easter, which the clergy of the south of Ireland had abandoned, to conform to the new usage of Rome,[2] but which the Scots of the north of Ireland and of all Caledonia obstinately preserved as they had received it from their fathers.[3]

Everything had to be done, or done over again,

[1] "Omnium qui considebant ad ipsum ora et oculi conversi . . . ipsum esse dignum episcopatu, ipsum ad erudiendos incredulos et indoctos mitti debere decernunt, qui gratia discretionis, quæ virtutum mater est, ante omnia probatur imbutus, sicque illum ordinantes, ad prædicandum miserunt."

[2] In 630, at the Synod of Leighlin, thanks to the efforts of two monks, Laserian, superior of the 1500 monks of Leighlin, and Cummian, the disciple of Columba, and author of a famous letter, of which we shall presently hear more, in connection with this wearisome discussion. Compare LANIGAN, *Ecclesiastical History of Ireland*, vol. ii. chap. 15.

[3] "Qualiscumque fuerit ipse . . . reliquit successores magna continentia ac divino amore regularique institutione insignes. . . . Ab hac

in the once Christian Northumbria. To the south, in Deïra, the ravages of Cadwallon and Penda do not seem to have left any traces of the mission of Paulinus except the solitary church at York, where the deacon James had maintained the celebration of Christian worship, and which, begun by Edwin, was completed by Oswald. In Bernicia we must conclude that the Roman bishop restricted himself to itinerating missions, followed by those general baptisms of which we have spoken, but that he had not founded there any permanent station, since, until the cross was planted by Oswald on the eve of his victory over the Britons, it is said that no one had ever seen a church or an altar, or any emblem of the Christian faith.[1]

It was thus a hard task, and one well worthy of a follower of Columba, which presented itself to the monk of Iona, trained in the school of that great missionary.[2]

ergo insula, ab horum collegio monachorum, ad provinciam Anglorum instituendam in Christo, missus est Ædan, accepto gradu episcopatus."—Bede, iii. 4, 5.

[1] "Nullum Christianæ fidei signum, nulla ecclesia, nullum altare in tota Berniciorum gente erectum est, priusquam hoc sacræ crucis vexillum novus militiæ ductor, dictante fidei devotione, contra hostem immanissimum pugnaturus statueret."—Bede, iii. 2, 11.

[2] That is to say, under his successors; for although Aïdan, ordained bishop in 635, might very well have seen and heard Columba, who died in 597, yet no proof can be found in support of Colgan's assertion, which ranks him, as well as his successors Finan and Colman, among the direct disciples of the great abbot (*Trias Thaumaturga*, p. 487, 489). He bases this assertion simply on the mention of three persons bearing these names in the biography of Adamnan. Colgan himself deprives this argument of all weight by proving that there are in the Irish calendars 23 saints of the name of Aïdan, and 109 of the name of Colman or Colomban.

Aïdan had brought with him several of his brethren, and the number of Celtic monks who came to help him increased from day to day. It became necessary to assign to them, or rather to create for them, a centre of operations. The king left to Aïdan the choice of the seat of his bishopric. Although his diocese comprised the whole of Northumbria, he does not seem to have thought of occupying the vacant see of York. Whether he yielded in this to the prejudices and dislikes which separated the Scots from Roman usages, or whether he was unwilling to quit the northern district, where the mission of Paulinus had left the fewest traces, and where, consequently, he had most work to do, it is certain that he chose to place his episcopal monastery at a distance from the churches founded by the Roman monks in the southern part of the country. He preferred a position a little more central, near the royal residence of Oswald, and on the coast, but much nearer the Firth of Forth than the mouth of the Humber, which mark the two extreme limits of Oswald's kingdom to the north and south.

The monastic capital of Northumbria is fixed in the isle of Lindisfarne.

This choice of a residence shows that, as a monk of Iona, ambitious of following in every respect the example of the great apostle of his race, founder of the sanctuary whence he issued, Aïdan took pleasure in imitating St Columba even in local particulars. Like him he settled his community in an island near the shore, almost as small, as insignificant, and as barren as Iona was when the holy exile

from Ireland landed there. Its position was even in some sort a repetition, in the North Sea, and to the east of Great Britain, of the position of Iona upon the opposite coast, and on the shore of the Atlantic.

Amid the waves of the Northern Sea, opposite the green hills of Northumberland and the sandy beach which extends between the border town of Berwick on the north, and the imposing ruins of the feudal fortress of Bamborough on the south, lies a low island, flat and sombre, girt with basaltic rocks, forming a kind of square block, which terminates to the north-west in a long point of land stretching towards the mouth of the Tweed and Scotland. This island bears the impress of melancholy and barrenness. It can never have produced anything but the sorriest crops and some meagre pasturage. There is not a tree, not an undulation, not one noticeable feature, save a small conical hill to the south-west, now crowned by a strong castle of picturesque form, but recent construction. In this poor islet was erected the first Christian church of the whole district, now so populous, rich, and industrious, which extends from Hull to Edinburgh. This was Lindisfarne—that is to say, the Mother Church, the religious capital of the north of England and south of Scotland, the residence of the first sixteen bishops of Northumbria, the sanctuary and monastic citadel of the whole country round—the Iona of the Anglo-Saxons. The

resemblance of Lindisfarne to Iona, of the colony to the metropolis, the daughter to the mother, is striking. These two isles, once so celebrated, so renowned, so influential over two great and hostile races, have the same sombre and melancholy aspect, full of a wild and savage sadness. Religion only could people, fertilise, and tranquillise these arid and desolate shores.

The island chosen by Aïdan is, however, an island during only a portion of each day. As at Mont St Michel in France, twice in the twenty-four hours the ebbing tide leaves the sands uncovered, and the passage can be made on foot to the neighbouring shore,[1] though not always without danger, for many stories are told of travellers drowned in attempting to cross to the holy isle at low water. From this new abode Aïdan, looking southward, could descry far off the rock and stronghold of Bamborough, where Oswald, after the example of his grandfather Ida, had established his capital. His eye, like his heart, could there hail the young and glorious prince who was his friend, his helper, and his rival.

Nothing is known of the early history of St Aïdan. When he first appears to us he is already a monk at Iona, and clothed with a certain authority among his brethren. Even when raised to the episcopate,

[1] "Insula hæc, accedente reumate, quotidie his undis spumantibus maris alluitur, totiesque refluis maris sinibus, antiqua terra relinquitur." —Reginaldi Monachi Dunelmensis, *Libellus de Admirandis B. Cuthberti Virtutibus*, c. 12.

he remained always a monk, not only in heart, but in life. Almost all his Celtic fellow-workers, whether from Ireland or Scotland, were monks like himself, and followed the cenobitical rule of their order and country. A hundred years after Aïdan, the system which he had established at Lindisfarne was still in full vigour; and, as in his day, the bishop was either himself the abbot of the insular community, or lived there as a monk, subject, like the other religious, to the authority of the abbot, elected with the consent of the brotherhood. The priests, deacons, choristers, and other officials of the cathedral church, were all monks.[1] But this monastic discipline and order would have availed little if the missionary-head of the institution had not possessed the character common to great servants of the truth, and been endowed with those virtues which the apostolical office demands.

Apostolic virtues of the monk-bishop Aïdan.

Bede,[2] who was born twenty years after the death of the monk-bishop, and who lived all his life in the country which was fragrant with the memory of Aïdan's virtues, has made his character and life the subject of one of the most eloquent

[1] "Monachi erant maxime qui ad prædicandum venerant. . . . Monachus ipse episcopus Ædan."—Bede, *Hist. Eccles.*, iii. 3. "Et monasticam cum suis omnibus vitam semper agere solebat; unde ab illo omnes loci ipsius antistites usque hodie sic episcopale exercent officium, ut regente monasterium abbate quem ipsi cum consilio fratrum elegerint, omnes . . . monasticam per omnia cum ipso episcopo regulam servent."—Bede, *Vit. S. Cuthberti*, c. 16.

[2] It is to Bede we owe all that is known of Aïdan, as of so many other personages of the seventh century.—Compare *Act. SS. Bolland.*, vol. vi. Augusti, p. 688.

and attractive pictures ever drawn by the pen of the venerable historian. The praise which he awards to him is not only more expressive and more distinct than that given to any other of the monastic apostles of England, but also so much the less to be suspected of partiality, that it is qualified by the most energetic protests against his Celtic peculiarities. "He was," Bede tells us, "a pontiff inspired with a passionate love of goodness; but at the same time full of a surpassing gentleness and moderation." Faithful to all the noble teachings of his monastic cradle, he appeared to the future clergy of Northumbria as a marvel of self-denial and austerity. He was the first to practise what he taught, and none could ever reproach him with having failed to fulfil, to his best ability, all the precepts of the gospels, of the apostles, or the prophets.

Indifferent to all worldly possessions, Aïdan expended in alms all that he received from the kings and rich men. To the astonishment of the Saxons, who were, like the modern English, excellent horsemen, and valued nothing more highly than the horse, it was always on foot that the bishop went through town and country, penetrating everywhere —now among the rich, now among the poor— baptising those who were still heathen, confirming in the faith those who were already Christians, and stimulating all to alms-giving and good works. All who accompanied him, monks or laymen, had to devote a certain portion of each day to medita-

tion—that is to say, to reading the Bible and learning the Psalter. Unwearied in study, humble and peaceful, charitable and sincere, he was especially distinguished by zeal against the sins of the rich. Far from sparing any of their vices or excesses, he rebuked them with the greatest sharpness ; and contrary to the received custom, he never made any present to the chiefs or nobles, restricting himself to simple hospitality when they came to visit him, and giving away to the first beggar whom he met the gifts which they heaped upon him. But the priestly courage which armed him against the pride of the powerful was transformed into tender and watchful solicitude when he had to defend the feeble, to relieve the needy, or to comfort the unfortunate. His, in a word, was the heart of a true priest and apostle, disdainful of all false grandeur and vain prosperity, and victorious over all the mean and perverse tendencies of his time, and of all times.[1]

[1] "Scripsi hæc . . . nequaquam in eo laudans vel eligens hoc quod de observantia paschæ minus perfecte sapiebat, immo hoc multum detestans . . . sed quasi verax historicus. . . . Quantum ab eis qui eum novere didicimus, summæ mansuetudinis et pietatis et moderaminis virum. . . . Unde (ab Iona) inter alia vivendi documenta, saluberrimum abstinentiæ et modestiæ clericis exemplum reliquit. . . . Cuncta et urbana et rustica loca, non equorum dorso, sed pedum incessu. . . . Sive adtonsi, seu laici, meditari deberent, id est aut legendis Scripturis aut psalmis discendis operam dare. . . . Nunquam divitibus honoris sive timoris gratia, si qua deliquissent reticebat ; sed aspera illos invectione corrigebat. . . . Nullam potentibus seculi pecuniam, excepta solummodo esca si quos hospitio susccpisset, unquam dare solebat. . . . Animum iræ et avaritiæ victorem, superbiæ simul et vanæ gloriæ contemptorem . . . auctoritatem sacerdote dignam, redarguendi superbos ac potentes, pariter et infirmos

Aïdan retained nothing for himself of all the gifts of land which the generosity of the Saxon kings and nobles bestowed upon the Church, whose doctrines they had just embraced. He was content with Lindisfarne and the scanty fields of his poor little isle. But he reserved for himself, wherever it was possible in the vast *villæ* of the kings and nobles, a site for a chapel, with a small chamber attached, where he prepared his sermons, and in which he lodged during his incessant and prolonged journeys.[1]

He takes especial care of the young and of slaves.

Like St Gregory the Great, whom, though not his disciple, he emulated in welldoing, he took an especial interest in the education of children and the emancipation of slaves. From the beginning of his mission he attached to himself twelve English youths, whom he educated with the greatest care for the service of Christ, and of whom one at least became a bishop. Every church and monastery founded by him became immediately a school where the children of the English received from Aïdan's monks an education as complete as that to be had in any of the great Irish monasteries.[2] As to slaves, he devoted principally to their re-

consolandi, ac pauperes recreandi vel defendendi clementiam."—BEDE, iii. 3, 5, 17.

[1] "In hoc habens ecclesiam et cubiculum, sæpe ibidem diverti ac manere, atque inde ad prædicandum circumquaque exire consueverat: quod ipsum et in aliis villis regiis solebat, utpote nil propriæ possessionis, excepta ecclesia sua et adjacentibus agellis, habens."—BEDE, iii. 17.

[2] "Imbuebantur præceptoribus Scotis parvuli Anglorum una cum majoribus studiis et observatione disciplinæ regularis."—BEDE, iii. 3.

demption the gifts which he owed to the munificence of the Anglo-Saxons, endeavouring especially to save such as, to use Bede's expression, had been "unjustly sold," — which means, probably, those who were not foreign prisoners, or who had not been condemned to slavery as the punishment of crime. For it has been already stated, and it must be kept in mind, that the Saxons, as well as the Celts, made no scruple of selling their brethren and their children like cattle. The freedmen were carefully instructed by Aïdan, numbered among his disciples, and frequently raised to the priesthood.[1] Heathen barbarism was thus assailed and undermined in its very citadel by monks, both from the north and from the south, and by slaves promoted to the rank of priests.

King Oswald helper and interpreter to Bishop Aïdan.

The king and the bishop rivalled each other in virtue, in piety, in ardent charity, and desire for the conversion of souls. Thanks to their mutual and unwearied efforts, every day saw the Christian religion spreading farther and taking deeper root; every day joyous crowds hastened to feed on the bread of the Divine Word, and to plunge into the waters of baptism; every day numerous churches, flanked by monasteries and schools, rose from the soil. Every day new gifts of land, due to the generosity of Oswald and the North-

[1] "Ad redemptionem eorum qui injuste fuerant venditi. . . . Multos quos pretio dato redemerat, suos discipulos fecit, atque ad sacerdotalem usque gradum erudiendo atque instituendo provexit."—Bede, iii. 5.

umbrian nobles, came to swell the patrimony of the monks and the poor. Every day, also, new missionaries, full of zeal and fervour, arrived from Ireland or Scotland to help on the work of Aïdan and Oswald, preaching and baptising converts. And at the same time James the Deacon, sole survivor of the former Roman mission, redoubled his efforts to help forward the regeneration of the country in which he had already seen the faith flourish and decay. He took advantage of the restoration of peace, and the increasing number of the faithful, to add, like a true disciple of St Gregory, the teaching of music to the teaching of religion, and to familiarise the English of the north with the sweet and solemn melody of the Roman chant, as already in use among the Saxons of Canterbury.[1]

Oswald did not content himself with giving his friend Aïdan the obedience of a son and the support of a king, in all that could aid in the extension and consolidation of Christianity. He himself gave a personal example of all the Christian virtues, and often passed whole nights in prayer, still more occupied with the concerns of the heavenly kingdom than with those of the earthly realm which he had so ably won, and for which he was so soon

[1] "Exin cœpere plures per dies de Scotorum regione venire. . . . Construebantur ecclesiæ per loca, confluebant ad audiendum verbum populi gaudentes, donabantur munere regio. . . . Qui quoniam canendi in ecclesia erat peritissimus, recuperata postmodum pace in provincia et crescente numero fidelium, etiam magister ecclesiasticæ cantionis juxta morem Romanorum seu Cantuariorum multis cœpit existere."—BEDE, iii. 3, 11, 20.

to die. He was not only lavish in alms, giving of his riches, with humble and tender charity, to the humble and the poor, to the sick, to travellers, and to needy strangers who came to the bishop to be nourished with the Word of Life. In addition he constituted himself Aïdan's interpreter; "and it was," says Bede, "a touching spectacle to see the king, who had, during his long exile, thoroughly learned the Celtic tongue, translating to the great chiefs and the principal officials of his court, the lords and thanes, the sermons of the bishop, who as yet spoke but imperfectly the language of the Anglo-Saxons.[1]

The tender friendship and apostolic brotherhood which thus united the king and the bishop of the Northumbrians has, perhaps more than anything else, contributed to exalt and hallow their memory in the annals of Catholic England.

Oswald marries the daughter of the King of Wessex, and converts his father-in-law.

Oswald was too active, too popular, too energetic, and too powerful not to make his actions and influence felt beyond the bounds of his own kingdom. Like Edwin, whom he resembles in so many points, notwithstanding the rivalry of their two families, he turned his thoughts and his steps to

[1] "Qui temporalis regni gubernacula tenens, magis pro æterno regno semper laborare solebat. . . . Pauperibus et peregrinis semper humilis, benignus et largus. . . . Semper, dum viveret, infirmis et pauperibus consulere, eleemosynas dare, opem ferre non cessabat. . . . Pulcherrimo sæpe spectaculo contigit, ut evangelizante antistite qui Anglorum linguam perfecte non noverat, ipse rex suis ducibus ac ministris interpres verbi extiteret cœlestis, quia tam longo exilii sui tempore linguam Scotorum plene didicerat."—Bede, iii. 12, 9, 6, 3.

the south of the Humber. Edwin had converted, for a time at least, his neighbours and vassals, the East Anglians. Oswald went further, and contributed largely to the conversion of the most powerful kingdom of the Heptarchy, next to Northumbria—that of the Saxons of the West, Wessex—a kingdom which was destined to absorb and supplant all the others. The kings of this nation also professed to be of the blood of Odin ; they were descended from a chief called Cerdic, perhaps the bravest of all the invaders of the British soil, and who had consolidated his conquests by forty years of craft and war. It was among this warlike race that Oswald sought a wife ; but, contrary to ordinary precedent, it was, in this new union, the husband, and not the wife, who took the initiative in conversion. When he went for his bride, Kineburga, into the country of the West Saxons, the King of Northumbria met there an Italian bishop, who had undertaken their conversion, finding them entirely pagan. He did his best to second the laborious efforts of the foreign missionary, and the king, whose daughter he was about to wed, having consented to be baptised, Oswald stood sponsor for him, and thus became the spiritual father of him whose son-in-law he was about to become.[1] He took back to Northumbria

[1] "Cum omnes paganissimos inveniret. . . . Pulcherrimo et Deo digno consortio, cujus erat filiam accepturus in conjugem, ipsum prius secunda generatione Deo dicatum sibi accepit in filium."—BEDE, iii. 7.

with him the young convert, who soon bore him a son, little worthy of his sire, but yet destined at least to be the founder of a monastery which acted a part of some importance in the history of his people.

Invasion of Penda at the head of the Mercians and Britons.

All this prosperity was soon to end, as all that is good and beautiful ends here below. The terrible Penda was still alive, and, under the iron hand of that redoubtable warrior, Mercia remained the stronghold of Paganism, even as Northumbria had become under Edwin and Oswald the centre of Christian life in Great Britain. He had left unrevenged the death of his ally, the Briton Cadwallon; he had done nothing to hinder the accession and establishment of a new Christian king in Northumbria. But when that king essayed to cross the river which formed the boundary of the two kingdoms, and to unite to his domains a province which had always belonged to the Mercians,[1] Penda, notwithstanding his age, resumed his old inveteracy towards those whom he saw — again like Edwin—deserting the worship of their common ancestor Odin, and claiming an insupportable supremacy over all the Saxons, Pagan or Christian. He accordingly renewed with the Britons the alliance which had already been so disastrous to

[1] Oswald, whether as a conqueror or only as bretwalda or chief of the confederation, had invaded that province of Lindsey, where Paulinus had founded the Cathedral of Lincoln, where the monks themselves reproached the sainted King of Northumbria, forty years after his death, with having wished to rule over them.

the Northumbrians, and, placing himself at the head of the two combined armies, waged for two years a sanguinary war against Oswald, which ended in a decisive battle at Maserfeld, on the western border of Mercia and Northumbria.[1] The struggle was fierce; the brother of Penda perished in the fight, but Oswald, the great and beloved Oswald, shared the same fate. He died on the field, in the flower of his years, at the age of thirty-eight. There he fell—the historian of the English Church says with emphasis—fighting for his country. But his last word, his last thought, was for heaven, and for the eternal welfare of his people. "My God," said he, on seeing himself encircled with enemies, overwhelmed by numbers, and already pierced by a forest of arrows and lances—"my God, save their souls."[2] The last cry of this saintly spirit, this young hero, remained long graven on the memory of the Saxon people, and passed into a proverb to denote those who prayed without ceasing in life and in death.

Battle of Maserfield. 5th August 642. Oswald is slain.

The ferocity of Penda was not even satisfied by the death of his young rival. When the dead body

[1] According to some, near Winwick, in Lancashire; according to others, at Oswestry, near Shrewsbury.

[2] "Ubi pro patria dimicans a paganis interfectus est. . . . Vulgatum est autem et in consuetudinem proverbii versum quod etiam inter orationes vitam finierit. . . . Cum armis et hostibus circumseptus, jamjam videret se esse perimendum, oravit pro animabus exercitus sui. Unde dicunt in proverbio: *Deus, miserere animabus, dixit Oswald cadens in terra.*"—BEDE, iii. 9, 12. "Cum stipatoribus fusis ipse quoque ferratam silvam in pectore gereret."—WILHELM. MALMESB., *De Gest.*, lib. i. c. 3.

of the King of Northumbria was brought from the battle-field into his presence, the old savage caused the head and hands of the hero to be cut off, and set up on stakes, to intimidate both conquerors and conquered. The noble remains were thus exposed for a whole year, till his brother and avenger, Oswy, carried them away. The hero's head was then taken to Lindisfarne, to the great monastery which he had so richly endowed, and where his holy friend Aïdan awaited it ; but his hands were deposited in a chapel in the royal fortress of Bamborough, the cradle of that Northumbrian dominion which the arms of his ancestors had founded, and which his own had so valiantly restored.

Thus perished, at the age of thirty-eight, Oswald, ranked by the Church among her martyrs, and by the Anglo-Saxon people among its saints and heroes of most enduring fame. Through the obscurity of that thankless and confused age, the eye rests gratefully on this young prince, reared in exile among the hereditary enemies of his race, who was consoled for the loss of a throne by his conversion to Christianity : who regained the kingdom of his fathers at the point of the sword, and planted the first cross on his native soil, at the moment when he freed it from the usurper ; crowned by the love and devotion of the people on whom he bestowed the blessings of peace and of supreme truth, spending his very life for its sake ; united for a few short years to a wife whom, in marrying, he

had made a Christian; gentle and strong, serious and sincere, pious and intelligent, humble and bold, active and gracious, a soldier and a missionary, a king and a martyr, slain in the flower of his age on the field of battle, fighting for his country and praying for his subjects. Where shall we find in all history a hero more nearly approaching the ideal, more richly gifted, more worthy of eternal remembrance, and, it must be added, more completely forgotten?

Oswald is venerated as a martyr.

It was long, however, before his name was forgotten. During the whole Anglo-Saxon period, and even after the Norman Conquest, under the Plantagenets, this gallant soldier, great king, and generous Christian, continued to be the object of popular veneration. The chroniclers and poets of the time vied with each other in celebrating his fame. "Who, then," said one of them, with that mingling of classic associations and Christian ideas so habitual to the monks and all the writers of the middle ages—"Who, then, is Hercules? who is Alexander the Great? who is Julius Cæsar? We are taught that Hercules conquered himself, Alexander conquered the world, and Cæsar the enemies of Rome; but Oswald conquered at once the world, his enemies, and himself."[1]

The monks of the great and magnificent Church

[1] "Quis fuit Alcides? Quis Cæsar Julius? Aut quis
Magnus Alexander? Alcides se superasse
Fertur; Alexander mundum, sed Julius hostem.
Se simul Oswaldus et mundum vicit et hostem."
—Ap. CAMDEN, *Britannia*, iii. 493.

of Hexham went in procession every year to celebrate the day consecrated to him at the site of the cross which he had planted on the eve of his first victory. But the love and gratitude of the Christian people gave a still greater glory to the place of his defeat and death. Pilgrims came thither in crowds to seek relief from their sufferings, and had each a miraculous cure to relate on their return. The dust which his noble blood had watered was collected with care and conveyed to great distances as a remedy for disease, or a preservative from the evils of life. By dint of carrying away this dust a hollow was scooped out of a man's size, and which seemed the ever-open tomb of this martyr of his country. On seeing the turf around this hollow clothed with an unwonted verdure, more delicate and beautiful than elsewhere, travellers said that the man who had perished there must needs have been more holy and more pleasing in God's sight than all the other warriors who rested beneath that sward.[1] The veneration of which his remains were the object spread not only among all the Saxons and Britons of Great Britain, but even beyond the seas, in Ireland, and among the Greeks and the Germans. The very stake on which the head of

[1] "Contigit ut pulverem ipsum ubi corpus ejus in terram corruit . . . multi auferentes . . . qui mox adeo increbuit, ut paulatim ablata exinde terra fossam ad mensuram staturæ virilis reddiderit. Quidam de natione Britonum, iter faciens juxta ipsum locum, vidit unius loci spatium cetero campo venustius ac viridius : cœpitque sagaci animo conficere quod nulla esset alia causa insolitæ illo in loco viriditatis, nisi quia ibidem sanctior cetero exercitu vir aliquis fuisset interfectus."—BEDE, iii. 9, 10.

the royal martyr had been fixed was cut up into relics, the fragments of which were regarded as of sovereign efficacy in the healing both of body or of mind. These things provoke a pitying smile from the wise and witty, who in times and countries enslaved by the ascendancy of numbers and physical force are not forbidden to philosophise. But no safer or sweeter asylum has ever been found for humiliated patriotism, violated justice, or vanquished freedom, than the pious tenderness with which Christian nations once surrounded the tomb and relics of those who died for the faith and their rights.

Prediction of Aïdan in regard to Oswald's hand.

A kind of prophecy, that Oswald's bones would become relics, had been made to him by Aïdan, on the following occasion :—

The bishop had made it a rule to accept very rarely those invitations to the royal table which were considered, among the Germanic races, as signs of the most marked distinction. When he did go he was present only at the beginning of the repast, after which he would hasten away to apply himself, with his monks, to reading or prayer. But one Easter-day the monk-bishop, being at dinner with the king, and seated beside him, had just raised his hand to bless a silver dish filled with delicacies which was placed before Oswald, when the officer to whom the charge of the poor was specially intrusted, suddenly entered to announce that there was a crowd of beggars in the street

who besought alms of the king. Oswald immediately gave orders that the food, and the silver dish which contained it, the latter broken in pieces, should be divided among the beggars. As he stretched out his hand to give this order, the bishop seized it and cried, "May this hand never perish!"[1] The following year it was severed from his body, and picked up on the battle-field where he gave his life for God and his people; and the hand of the royal martyr, enshrined in the sanctuary of the ancient Northumbrian capital, continued entire and incorruptible for centuries, was seen and kissed by innumerable Christians, and disappeared only in that abyss of spoliation and sacrilege in which Henry VIII. engulfed all the monastic glories and treasures of England.

[1] "Adceleravit ocius ad legendum aut orandum egredi. . . . Discus argenteus regalibus epulis refertus, jamjam essent manus ad benedicendum panem missuri. . . . Ministrum cui suscipiendorum inopum erat cura delegata. . . . Pontifex qui adsidebat . . . apprehendit dextram ejus et ait: *Nunquam inveterascat hæc manus.*"—BEDE, iii. 5, 6. The Bollandists prove (vol. ii. Aug., p. 87) that the hand still existed in the sixteenth century.

CHAPTER II.

NORTHUMBRIA UNDER THE SUCCESSORS OF OSWALD —THE CELTIC BISHOPS—THE GREAT ABBESSES, HILDA AND EBBA.

Oswald's successors in Northumbria: Oswy in Bernicia; Oswin in Deïra.—Oswin's intimacy with Bishop Aïdan.—The son of the mare and the son of God.—New outrages of Penda.—Aïdan stops the burning of Bamborough.—Struggle between Oswy and Oswin.—Murder of Oswin.—Death of Aïdan twelve years after his friend.—The double monastery of Tynemouth, built above the tomb of Oswin.—The wife of the murderer dedicates a monastery to the expiation of the murder.—Reign of Oswy, who was venerated as a saint, notwithstanding his crime, because of his zeal for the truth.—Successors of Aïdan at Lindisfarne, sent by the monks of Iona.—Episcopate of the Scot Finan.—He builds the Cathedral of Lindisfarne of wood.—Colman, second successor.—Novitiate at Melrose.—The young Anglo-Saxons go to study in Ireland.—The female monasteries of Northumbria.—Heïa, the first nun.—Hartlepool.—Aïdan gives the veil to Hilda, princess of Deïra: her rule of thirty years at Whitby.—Description of the place.—The six bishops who issued from the double monastery.—Ceadmon, the cowherd, vassal of Hilda; the first Anglo-Saxon poet: precursor of Milton, he sings the Paradise Lost; his holy life and death.—The Princess Ebba, of the rival dynasty, sister of Oswald and Oswy, foundress and Abbess of Coldingham: she also rules for thirty years.—Notable disorders in her monasteries.—Fervour and austerity of the Northumbrian monks: extraordinary fasts: different characteristics of Lindisfarne, Coldingham, and Melrose.—A precursor of Dante.—Foundation of Lastingham: Cedd, monk of Lindisfarne.—Testimony borne by the Romano-Benedictine Bede to the virtue, disinterestedness, and popularity of the Celtic missionaries.—Nevertheless, resistance and opposition are not awanting.—Contrast and fickleness of character in the kings as in the people.—Joy of the natives of the coast on seeing the monks shipwrecked.

Oswald's successors in Northumbria.

On the death of Oswald Northumbria fell a prey, first to the ravages of Mercian invasion, then to the complications and weakness of a divided succession. Like the Merovingian, and even the Carlovingian Franks, although with a less fatal obstinacy, the Anglo-Saxons, and particularly the Angles of Northumbria, could not resist the inclination which led them to accept or to incite the division of a kingdom among several princes as soon as there appeared several heirs of a deceased king. It must be supposed that these divisions answered in England, as in France, to certain distinctions of race, or to certain exigencies of local or provincial self-government, which could not be reconciled with the existence of one supreme authority. Oswald left a son in childhood, whose claims were not at that moment taken into consideration. His brother Oswy, still in the flower of his youth, and, though much less saintly than Oswald, no less a good soldier and valiant captain, at once took his place in Bernicia—that is to say, in the northern part of Northumbria. As for Deïra, it fell to a prince of the Deïrian dynasty, grand-nephew to Ella, the founder of that race,[1] and son of that ill-fated Osric who had reigned for a year only over Southern Northumbria after the downfall of his cousin Edwin in 633—a short reign, which left him scarce time enough to renounce the baptism which he had re-

Oswy in Bernicia.

[1] See the genealogical table, Appendix I.

ceived from the hands of Paulinus, and to perish under the sword of Cadwallon's Britons. His son, called Oswin, had been saved while yet a child by his friends, who sent him out of Northumbria, and had passed his youth in exile, like Edwin, and the two brothers Oswald and Oswy. Exile seems to have been the necessary and salutary apprenticeship of the Northumbrian kings.

Oswin, king in Deïra. 642-51.

On hearing of the death of Oswald he claimed his right of succession. The old subjects of his father and grand-uncle gladly received him.[1] The principal nobles met in assembly, acknowledged his hereditary right, and proclaimed him King of the Deïrians; and for seven years he governed them to the satisfaction of all. He was still very young, of lofty stature, endowed with remarkable comeliness and grace — a matter of no small importance in an age and among a people extremely sensible to external advantages. But he had, in addition, all the virtues which were then regarded as proofs of sanctity. His extreme gentleness, his charity, and, above all, his humility, were universally extolled. He was, moreover, so accessible, so courte-

[1] "Audiens Oswinus exulans, quod, Oswaldo defuncto, regnaret Oswin pro fratre suo, inito cum suis consilio ad regnum Deïrorum regressus, ab omni plebe lætante recepitur. . . . Omnibus ejus beneficia postulantibus hilariter impendebat."—JOAN. TYNEMOUTH., ap. BOLLAND., t. iv. Aug., p. 63. "Parvo temporis intervallo principes primatesque regni convenerunt in unum communicatoque unanimiter consilio B. Oswinum hæredi tatis juris successorem Deïrorum dominum in regem sublimantes."—*Vita Oswini*, p. 3., *in the Publications of the Surtees Society*, 1838.

ous and generous, that the noblest lords of all Northumbria vied with each other in seeking the honour of serving among those officers of his household whom the Latin historians designate in England, as elsewhere, by the name of *ministeriales*.[1]

Although Oswin had been exiled among the Saxons of Wessex, and not in Scotland, like his cousins and rivals Oswald and Oswy, and had been thus entirely out of contact with the Celtic monks, he was already a Christian when he returned to Northumbria, and did not hesitate to recognise the episcopal authority of Aïdan. During his whole reign the monk of Iona, now bishop of Lindisfarne, continued to travel throughout the two kingdoms which formed his immense diocese—not confining himself to preaching in the new churches, but going from house to house to foster beside the domestic hearth the seeds of the new-sown faith.[2] It was a special pleasure to him on such occasions to rest under the hospitable roof of the young king of Deïra, with whom he always lived in as tender and thorough a union as that which had united him to Oswald.

His connection with Aïdan.

[1] "In maxima omnium rerum affluentia et ipse amabilis omnibus præfuit. . . . Aspectu venustus et statura sublimis et affatu jucundus et moribus civilis et manu omnibus nobilibus et ignobilibus largus. . . . Unde contigit ut . . . undique ad ejus ministerium de cunctis prope provinciis viri etiam nobilissimi concurrent."—Bede, iii. 14.

[2] "Propter nascentis fidei teneritudinem provinciam circumeundo fidelium domos intrare verbique divini semina pro captu singulorum in agro cordis eorum cominus spargere."—*Vit. Osw.*, p. 4.

The son of the mare and the son of God.

An oft-repeated anecdote, which reveals at once the pleasant intimacy of their relations and the noble delicacy of their minds, has been left us by Bede. Aïdan, as we have said, performed all his apostolic journeys on foot, but it was the king's wish that he should have at least a horse to cross the rivers, or for other special emergencies; he gave him accordingly his best steed, splendidly caparisoned. The bishop accepted it, and made use of it; but being, as Bede calls him, "the father and worshipper of the poor," it happened ere long that, meeting a man who asked alms, he leaped down from his royal courser, and gave it, harnessed as it was, to the beggar. The king, being informed of this, said to Aïdan, as they were going to dinner together, "Lord bishop, what do you mean by giving my horse to that beggar? Had I not many other horses of less value, and property of every kind to give in alms, without the necessity of giving that horse that I had expressly chosen for your own special use?" "What is this you say?" replied Aïdan. "O king, the horse, which is the son of a mare, is it dearer to you than the man who is the son of God?" As he said this they entered the banqueting hall. Oswin, who had just returned from the chase, approached the fire with his officers, before sitting down at the table, and while he warmed himself, thought over the words of the bishop; then all at once taking off his sword, he threw himself at the feet of the saint, and implored

his pardon. "No more," said he, "shall I speak of it, and never more shall regret anything of mine that you give to the children of God." After which, reassured by the kind words of the bishop, he sat down joyously to dine. But the bishop, on the contrary, became very sad, and began to weep. One of his priests inquired the cause of his sadness; upon which he replied, in the Celtic tongue, which neither Oswin nor his attendants understood, "I know now that the king will not live long; never until now have I seen a king so humble; and this nation is not worthy of such a prince."[1]

This little tale, Ozanam truly says, forms a perfect picture; it discloses in those barbarous times a sweetness of sentiment, a delicacy of conscience, a refinement of manners, which, more than knowledge, is the sign of Christian civilisation.

The sad foreboding of the saint was realised only too soon. But it was not, like his predecessors, under the assault of the fierce Penda and the coalition of Mercians and Britons that the amiable

[1] "Desiliens ille præcepit equum ita ut erat stratus regaliter, pauperi dare: erat enim . . . cultor pauperum ac velut pater miserorum. . . . Quid voluisti, Domine Antistes, equum regium quem te conveniebat habere, pauperi dare? Numquid non habuimus equos viliores plurimos . . . qui ad pauperum dona sufficerent? . . . Quid loqueris, rex? Num tibi carior est ille filius equæ, quam ille filius Dei. . . . Porro rex (venerat enim de venatu) cœpit consistens ad focum calefieri cum ministris, et repente inter calefaciendum recordans verbum quod dixerat illi Antistes, discinxit se gladio suo . . . festinusque accedens ante pedes episcopi corruit. . . . Quia nunquam deinceps aliquid loquar de hoc, aut judicabo quid et quantum de pecunia nostra filiis Dei tribuas. . . . Lingua sua patria quam rex et domestici ejus non noverant. . . . Nunquam ante hoc vidi tam humilem regem."—Bede, iii. 14.

and conscientious Oswin was to perish. Penda, however, had resumed his devastating career, and continued for thirteen years longer to ravage Northumbria. But he seems to have entertained less unfriendly feelings to his neighbours the Deïrians and their king, than to the Bernicians, and Oswy the brother of his last victim. It is in the north of the two kingdoms that we again find him carrying everywhere fire and sword,[1] and attempting to give to the flames the royal fortress of Bamborough. There also we find Aïdan, the benefactor and protector of the country. Penda, not having been able to reduce the fortress either by assault or by investment, caused an enormous pile to be erected all round the rampart. He heaped on it all the wood of the surrounding forests, the driftwood from the beach, the beams, and even the thatch of the cottages in all the neighbouring villages which he had destroyed; then, as soon as the wind blew from the west, he set fire to the mass, with the hope of seeing the flames reach the town. Aïdan was at the time in the islet of Farne, an isolated rock in the open sea, a little to the south of Lindisfarne, and nearly opposite Bamborough, to which he often went, quitting his episcopal monastery to devote himself in solitude and silence to prayer. While he prayed he saw a cloud of black smoke and jets of flame covering the sky

Aïdan saves the capital of Northumbria from being burnt by Penda.

[1] "Cum cuncta quæ poterat ferro flammaque perderet."—Bede, iii. 17.

above the town where his dear Oswald once dwelt. Lifting his eyes and hands to heaven, he cried, with tears, "My God, behold all the evil that Penda does us!" At the same moment the wind changed, the flames whirled round upon the besiegers, destroying many of them, and they speedily abandoned the siege of a place so evidently under Divine protection.[1]

Struggle between Oswy and Oswin.

As if this formidable and pitiless enemy was not enough to desolate Northumbria, there arose in the heart of Oswy a jealous animosity which soon ripened into civil war. After seven years of union between the two kings of Bernicia and Deïra, occasions of estrangement, ever increasing, began to arise between them. These were owing, it cannot be doubted, to the preference which, we have already remarked, was shown by so many of the Northumbrian lords for the pleasant and cordial service of King Oswin. Oswy marched against the Deïrians. Oswin likewise put himself at the head of his army; but it was much less numerous than that of the King of Bernicia, and when the moment of battle arrived, he said to the chiefs and lords of his country that he was reluctant to make them risk their lives for him whom they had raised from the position of a poor exile to be their king, and who now did not

[1] "Plurimam congeriem trabium, tignorum, parietum, virgarum et tecti fenei et his urbem in magna altitudine circumdedit . . . ventis ferentibus globos ignis ac fumum, . . . *Vide, Domine, quanta mala fecit Penda.*"—Bede, iii. 16.

shrink either from renewed exile or death itself.[1] He then disbanded his troops and sought refuge with an earl on whom he thought he could rely, having just conferred on him, after many other bounties, the very manor of Gilling where he reckoned on finding an asylum. This wretched traitor gave him up to Oswy, who had the cruelty to kill him. One companion, Tondhere by name, alone remained to him. Oswin, resigned to his own death, besought that his friend might be spared; but he refused to survive his prince, preferring to sacrifice himself to that sentiment of passionate devotion which, among the Saxons, had preceded Christianity, and which justifies the title of knight prematurely applied to this brave and loyal adherent by one of the martyr's biographers.[2]

Oswin is put to death. 20th Aug. 651.

The king and his knight thus perished together; and twelve days afterwards the glorious Bishop Aïdan followed the king he loved to the tomb.[3] He fell sick during one of his innumerable missionary expeditions, and died under a tent which had been pitched in haste to shelter him at the back of a modest church which he had just built. He expired with his head resting against one of the buttresses of the church. It was a death which

Aïdan dies twelve days later.

[1] JOANN. TYNEMOUTH., l. c.

[2] "Maluit miles morti succumbere quam mortuo domino, etiamsi copia daretur, supervivere."—*Ibid.* Compare BEDE, l. c.

[3] "Non plus quam duodecimo post occisionem regis quem amabat die."—*Ibid.*

became a soldier of the faith upon his own fit field of battle.[1]

The double monastery of Tynemouth, founded on Oswin's tomb.

The body of Aïdan was carried to his monastic cathedral of Lindisfarne. But that of his royal friend, Oswin, was deposited in a chapel dedicated to the blessed Virgin, and situated on a granite headland almost entirely surrounded by the sea, at the mouth of the Tyne, a river which was then the boundary line between the two Northumbrian states of Deïra and Bernicia, and which is now one of the principal arteries of the maritime commerce of England. Ere long, over the sacred remains of this martyr, who was beloved and honoured by the Northumbrians of both kingdoms as their father and lord on earth, and their patron saint in heaven, there rose one of those double monasteries which included both monks and nuns within two separate enclosures, but under one government.[2] The nuns whose office it was to pray upon his tomb came from Whitby, which was already governed with a splendour as great as her authority was absolute, by the Abbess Hilda, herself sprung, like the martyred Oswin, from the Deïrian dynasty and the

[1] "Tetenderunt ægrotanti tentorium, ita ut tentorium parieti adhæreret ecclesiæ. Adclinis destinæ quæ extrinsecus ecclesiæ pro munimine erat adposita."

[2] "Ut dominum et patrem in terris, defensorem reputarent in cœlis: unde processu temporis ad majorem martyris gloriam sanctimoniales virgines de cœnobio S. Hildæ abbatissæ ad corpus ejus introductæ, usque ad persecutionem Danicam . . . in supremo religionis culmine permanserunt."—MATH. WESTM., ad ann. 1065. Compare BOLLAND., t. iv. Aug., p. 58, 59.

race of Ella. The vicissitudes of this great monastery throughout the invasions of the Danes and Normans; the constant or ever-reviving veneration with which the remains of St Oswin were regarded, even after the remembrance of his friend Aïdan was totally effaced;[1] the protection which the poor, the afflicted, and oppressed long found under the shadow of his sanctuary, and under the shelter of what was called the *Peace of St Oswin*, will possibly be related in the sequel of our narrative, or by other and more competent pens. We must content ourselves at present with merely pointing out the beautiful remains of the conventual church which was rebuilt in the thirteenth century, and which is enclosed within the fortress which defends the entrance of the Tyne. The seven great arcades, whose time-worn relics rise majestically against the sky from the height of their rock, produce a vivid effect on the traveller who arrives by sea, and nobly announce England's adoration of the ruins she has made.[2]

Some years later, on the very spot where Oswin had perished, at Gilling, near Richmond, a monastery was reared in expiation of so foul a crime, by

[1] "De sancto rege Oswino nonnulla dudum audieram, sed sancti Aydani episcopi nec nomen ad me pervenerat," says a traveller, miraculously cured in the twelfth century.—*Vita Oswini*, p. 32.

[2] There is a large and handsome recent work on the Monastery of Tynemouth, entitled, *History of the Monastery founded at Tynemouth in the Diocese of Durham, to the honour of God, under the invocation of the B. V. M. and St Oswin, King and Martyr, by* WILLIAM SIDNEY GIBSON. London, 1846, 2 vols. 4to.

Eanfleda, daughter of King Edwin, and wife of Oswy, consecrates a monastery in expiation of her husband's crime.

the wife of his murderer. This was no other than Eanfleda, daughter of King Edwin, she whose birth had contributed to the conversion of her father,[1] who had been the first-born of Christ in the Northumbrian kingdom, and who, after the overthrow of Edwin and the Roman mission in Northumbria, had been carried in her cradle by Bishop Paulinus into the country of her mother, Ethelburga, daughter of the first Christian king of Kent.

Oswy, who was as able as he was ambitious, readily perceived that it was not enough to murder a rival in order to secure himself in the exclusive sovereignty of Northumbria. He had previously wished to conciliate the opposing dynasty by a matrimonial alliance, as his father Ethelfrid had done.[2] In pursuance of this purpose, he had despatched to Canterbury, with Aïdan's approval and blessing, a priest respected for the gravity and sincerity of his character,[3] and abbot of one of the new monasteries,[4] to obtain from Queen Ethelburga, if she still lived, the hand of her daughter. His suit was granted, and the exiled princess returned to reign over the kingdom that she had quitted in her blood-stained cradle. In this double North-

[1] See preceding volume, p. 437.

[2] See the genealogical table of the two races in the Appendix.

[3] "Utta, multæ gravitatis vir et ob id omnibus, etiam principibus seculi honorabilis."—BEDE, iii. 15.

[4] At Gateshead on the Tyne, opposite Newcastle. Compare Smith's notes on BEDE, iii. 21. There was still at Gateshead, in 1745, a Catholic chapel, which was burnt by the populace out of hatred to Prince Charles Edward.—CAMDEN'S *Britannia*, Gough's edition, vol. iii. p. 123.

umbrian dynasty, the history of which is at once so dramatic and romantic, and so closely interwoven with the history of the conversion of the English, exile was almost always the forerunner of the kingly office, or of sainthood. Eanfleda, cousin-german of the murdered king, and wife of the king who killed him, obtained permission from her husband to build a monastery on the spot where the murder had been committed, that prayers might be offered there for ever for two souls, that of the victim and that of the murderer. The government of this new foundation was intrusted to Trumhere, himself a scion of the family of Deïrian princes, and one of those Anglo-Saxons who, like the negotiator of Eanfleda's marriage, had been trained and raised to the priesthood by the Celtic monks.[1] Abbot Trumhere.

Upon this noble daughter of Edwin, restored from exile to reign over the country of her ancestors as the wife of the cruel Oswy, the mind rests with emotion. A natural desire arises to attribute to her influence the happy change which appears to have been wrought in the character of Oswy from the day on which she induced him to expiate the crime with which he was stained, by founding this monastery. Forgetful of this crime, all the historians unite in extolling the virtues and Reign of Oswy. 642-670.

[1] "De natione quidam Anglorum, sed edoctus et ordinatus a Scotis . . . propinquus et ipse erat regis occisi: in quo monasterio assiduæ orationes pro utriusque regis, id est, et occisi, et ejus qui occidere jussit, salute æterna fierent."—BEDE, iii. 24.

exploits which distinguished the after portion of his prolonged and active reign. He did not continue at first, after the assassination of Oswin, the undisputed master of all Northumbria; he had to give up at least a part of Deïra to the young son of his brother Oswald, Ethelwald by name. But he retained, notwithstanding, an evident preponderance, not only in Northumbria, but in all England, the dignity of *Bretwalda* having fallen to him uncontested. The great event of his reign is the overthrow of the fierce heathen, Penda of Mercia, an event which sealed the final victory of Christianity among the Anglo-Saxons. But both before and after this culminating point of his prosperity, Oswy displayed so ardent and consistent a zeal for the extension and establishment of the Christian religion, that he was finally admitted to a place, sometimes too easily accessible, in the English martyrology.[1]

Aïdan's successors at Lindisfarne, sent by the monks of Iona.

Nevertheless, neither the zeal of Oswy, nor the purer ardour of his illustrious predecessor, could have prevailed against the various and formidable obstacles which the Gospel had to encounter among the Anglo-Saxons, had they not been directed, enlightened, and sustained by the admirable clergy whom Aïdan and his successors had trained in the cloisters of Lindisfarne and its dependent monasteries.

In regard to the succession of bishops in the

[1] 15th February: Compare *Act. SS. Bolland.*, vol. ii. Feb., p. 801.

new diocese of Lindisfarne, it is necessary to keep in mind the very significant difference between the usages followed by the Roman and those of the Celtic missionaries in the election of bishops. The first four successors of Augustine at Canterbury were all, as we have seen, chosen from among the Italian monks who had accompanied him to England: but they all belonged to that first mission, and were all freely chosen by their companions, old or new, in place of being successively sent from Rome, as the bishops of Lindisfarne were from Iona. In fact, at each vacancy in the see of Lindisfarne, the monks of Iona, who regarded that monastic cathedral, and perhaps the whole of christianised Northumbria, as their exclusive property, hastened to despatch a monk of their community to replace him who had rendered his soul to God. The Scottish monks, thus placed during thirty years at the head of the Church of the North of England, showed themselves thoroughly worthy of the saintly school whence they issued, and of the glorious mission to which they were consecrated. But it is, nevertheless, important to note that, either owing to distance or some other cause, Rome left to her missionary communities, her apostolic colonies, a liberty which was not possible under the harsh discipline of the Celtic Church.

The first monk sent from Iona to replace the noble Aïdan, is known by the name of St

Episcopate of the Scot Finan. 651-661.

Finan.[1] His episcopate was prosperous; it lasted ten years,[2] and was not interrupted by any melancholy event, such as those which had troubled the life of Aïdan by taking from him his two royal friends. Finan always lived on good terms with King Oswy, and before going to join his predecessor in heaven, he had the happiness of introducing to the Church the heads of the two great Saxon kingdoms, who came to seek baptism at the gates of Lindisfarne. In that island-sanctuary, where we must remember that the bishop was often in ecclesiastical subjection to the local abbot of the monastic community,

He builds of wood the Cathedral of Lindisfarne.

Finan caused a cathedral to be built, not of stone, like that which Paulinus and Edwin had commenced at York, but according to the Celtic custom, and like the churches built by Columba and his Irish monks: it was made entirely of wood, and covered with rushes, or rather with that long rough sea-grass, whose pivot-like roots bind together the sands on the sea-shore, and which is still found in great abundance on the island, as well as on the

[1] "Et ipse illo ab Hii Scotorum insula ac monasterio destinatus."—Bede, iii. 25. Cf. *Act. SS. Bolland.*, vol. iii. Feb., p. 21.

[2] The Breviary of Aberdeen, quoted by the Bollandists, affirms that Finan's promotion to the episcopate was preceded by a kind of election or postulation proceeding from the clergy and people of Northumbria, the nuns included: "Congregatis cleri populique concionibus, virorum et mulierum utriusque sexus, unanimiter S. Finanum in episcopum Lindisfarnensem Spiritus Sancti gratia eligi instanter postulaverunt et solemniter assumpserunt." But besides the fact of our finding no trace of any similar election in these ancient monuments, it appears to us incompatible with the formal testimony of the almost contemporary Northumbrian Bede: "Interea Aidano de hac vita sublato, Finan pro illo gradum episcopatus, a Scotis ordinatus ac missus, acceperat."—Bede, iii. 25.

sandy beach which has to be crossed before the traveller can reach Lindisfarne.[1]

Vast as was his diocese, which embraced the two great Northumbrian kingdoms, and great as must have been his influence over the other Saxon provinces, Finan seems farther to have preserved and exercised an authority not less complete over the country of his origin, the kingdom of the Dalriadian Scots. The Scots annalists all speak of a certain King Fergus, who, by his violence and exactions, had raised the indignation of the Scottish clergy, and called down upon himself a sentence of excommunication from the bishops of Lindisfarne, Finan and his successors.[2] These Celtic bishops were at all times far from courtly. Finan left among the Anglo-Saxons the reputation of a man rough and intractable,[3] and we shall see that his successor was no less difficult than himself.

He was succeeded by Colman, a monk of Iona, sent forth by that community, like Aïdan and Finan, to govern the Northumbrian Church,[4] and to evangelise the Northern Anglo-Saxons. He is believed to have been born in Ireland, and on

Colman, second successor of Aïdan. 661-664.

[1] "Fecit ecclesiam episcopali sede congruam ; quam tamen more Scotorum, non de lapide, sed de robore secto totam composuit atque arundine texit." This herb is called in English *bent*, and the sandy flats which it covers, and which extend along all the coast of Northumbria and of southern Scotland, take the name of *links*.

[2] Boece and Leslie, ap. Bolland., l. c.

[3] "Quod esset homo ferocis animi."—Bede, l. c.

[4] "Et ipse missus a Scotis. . . . Venit ad insulam Hii unde erat ad prædicandum verbum Anglorum genti destinatus."—Bede, iii. 23 ; iv. 4.

this account he is held in honour there. It has even been supposed that in him might be recognised one of those young disciples of Columba, whose rustic labours the great Abbot blessed and encouraged from the threshold of the cell in which he pursued his solitary studies.[1] True or false, this tradition accords with history, which shows us in Colman a pontiff penetrated with the same spirit as his predecessors, and always worthy of the monastic sanctuary which, for more than a century, was rendered illustrious by the genius and memory of Columba.

Novitiate of Melrose.

Lindisfarne, as may easily be supposed, did not suffice for the training, or indeed for the shelter, of the army of monks employed by the Celtic bishops in the spiritual conquest of Northumbria. To the north of the Tweed, the present boundary between England and Scotland, and about half-way from Lindisfarne to the Scots frontier, they established a kind of branch or establishment for novices, where the monks destined for the labours and trials of the apostolate were received and trained. Some of these, like their bishops, came from Iona, Ireland, and the land of the Scots,

[1] ADAMNAN, ii. 16. It is very difficult, however, to admit the identity of the *Colman* of whom Adamnan speaks with Colman the bishop of Lindisfarne: supposing he had been but twenty years of age at the date of Columba's death in 597, he would have been above eighty at the time of his promotion to the episcopate in 661, and would have been nearly one hundred when he died in 675. Comp. LANIGAN, op. cit. vol. iii. p. 59-61.

while others were taken from the ranks of the Saxon converts.[1] This outpost of Lindisfarne and Iona bore the name of *Melrose*—not the Cistercian Melrose, with the name of which Walter Scott has made us familiar, while its picturesque ruins attract all the visitors of the famous quadrilateral formed by the four most beautiful ruins in Scotland, Kelso, Jedburgh, Dryburgh, and Melrose—but a more ancient and more holy Melrose—whose memory has been too much effaced by its brilliant offspring. It was situated on a kind of rounded promontory almost completely encircled by the winding current of the Tweed, the banks of which at this part of its course are very abrupt and thickly wooded. The spot was one of profound solitude, as the very name indicates (*Mail-ross* or *Mul-ross*, desolate point);[2] and here was raised a sanctuary, which was for many years the centre of light and life to all the surrounding country, long frequented by pilgrims, whose paths are still pointed out, and from whence issued many of the saints most venerated in the south of Scotland and north of England.[3]

[1] VARIN, second paper.

[2] The site is still called *Old Melrose*. It is occupied by a pretty country-house, which belonged in July 1862 to a Mr Fairholme. It is not more than three miles from the magnificent ruins of the celebrated Cistercian abbey of the same name, the richest and most powerful of all the Scottish abbeys, and which still contained one hundred monks in 1542, when it was destroyed by the Reformers.—MORTON'S *Monastic Annals of Teviotdale;* Edin. 1832, folio. WADE'S *History of St Mary's Abbey, Melrose*, 1861, Edin.

[3] Boisil, first prior of Melrose, whose name is preserved in the neighbouring village of *Newtown St Boswell's* ; Eata, first abbot of Melrose,

The young Anglo-Saxons in the Irish monasteries.

The first Abbot of Melrose was Eata, one of the twelve young Saxons whom the first Celtic bishop chose for himself as the first-fruits of his episcopate.[1] But neither the zeal of the pastors nor the fervour of the converts was satisfied with those fountains of life and knowledge which gushed forth in Northumbrian soil. Older and more abundant springs were necessary to them. A crowd of youths, some the sons of thanes or nobles, others of the lowest rank, left their country to cross the sea and visit the distant island which was the cradle of their bishops and missionaries—not the monastic isle of Iona, but the great island of Ireland, where Columba and most of his disciples were born. Of these young Anglo-Saxons, some, inflamed by the love of study or of penance, at once enrolled themselves in the crowded ranks of those great Irish communities where the monks were counted by hundreds and even by thousands; others travelled from monastery to monastery, from cell to cell, seeking the masters who suited them best, and giving themselves up under these masters to the delight of *reading*—that is to say, of study, without binding themselves by any other obligation. All were received with magnificent hospitality by the Scots of Ireland, who freely lavished on them not only food and clothing but books and

then bishop of Lindisfarne; and especially the celebrated and popular Cuthbert, of whom more anon.

[1] See preceding chapter, p. 25.

instruction.[1] All the students who remained in Ireland, as well as those who returned to England, continued to retain a natural prepossession in favour of the ancient insular rites, and to be imbued with that peculiar spirit which so long characterised the Christianity of the Celtic races.

Thus began, under the most honourable conditions, and motives as pure as they were generous, the first historical relations between England and Ireland—between the two races, Saxon and Celtic, who were destined by an unhappy mystery to tear one another in pieces even before religion divided them; one of whom, repaying these early benefits by the blackest ingratitude, has long tarnished the lustre of her glory by the perverse stubbornness of her despotism.

The convents of Northumbria.

While so many young Northumbrians, as yet scarcely escaped from the darkness of idolatry, were thus rushing towards the very heights of ascetic life, or plunging with passionate enthusiasm into the studious and learned career of which Ireland was the great centre, and the Celtic cloisters the principal home, their sisters found asylums where peace and freedom were guaranteed to those whom the service of God and the vows of Christian virginity drew into them. Thanks to the solicitude of the missionary bishops of the line of Columba, the dignity, authority, and moral power which universal report from Tacitus downward

[1] See the text of Bede (iii. 27) already quoted, vol. iii. p. 299.

agrees in according to the Germanic woman, assumes in the cloister a new, more durable, and universal form, without, however, lessening the duty and right which she was acknowledged to possess of occasional intervention in the gravest concerns and most solemn deliberations of the commonwealth.

The principal monasteries destined to afford a home and stronghold to the noble daughters of the conquering Saxons were established on the coast of Northumbria, where already Bamborough and Lindisfarne, the military and the religious capitals of the country, were planted, as if the waves of that sea which their warlike ancestors had crossed, and which flowed direct from the coasts of Germany to beat upon the shores of the conquered island, were to be their safeguard against the dangers of the future. The first of these monasteries was built on the borders of Deïra and Bernicia, on a wooded promontory where the deer then found a covert, and which has since become, under the name of Hartlepool, one of the most frequented ports on the coast.[1] It was founded by a Northumbrian, Heïa by name, the first woman of her race who embraced conventual life, and who re-

Hartlepool. About 645.

[1] "Heruteu, id est, insula cervi."—BEDE, iii. 24. *Hert* or *hart*, stag; *eu*, isle. We shall take leave throughout to use the modern names of towns and monasteries instead of the Saxon names, which divers erudite modern writers have tried to reintroduce. We shall then say Whitby and not *Streaneshalch*, Hartlepool and not *Heruteu*, Hexham and not *Halgulstadt*.

ceived the veil and religious consecration from the hands of Bishop Aïdan.[1] The life of a community, and especially the functions of superior, soon, however, became fatiguing to Heïa, who betook herself to a solitary retreat in the interior of the country. Aïdan replaced her by a descendant of Odin and of Ella, a princess of the blood-royal and of the Deïrian dynasty. This was Hilda, grand-niece of Edwin, the first Christian king of Northumbria, and father of the queen who shared the throne and the bed of Oswy.

Aïdan gives the veil to the first Northumbrian nun, then to the Princess Hilda. 649.

This illustrious lady seemed to be called by her genius and character even more than her rank to exercise a great and legitimate authority over her compatriots. Born in exile, during the sovereignty of Ethelfrid, among the Saxons of the West, where her mother died a violent death, she had returned with her father on the restoration of his race in 617. In her early youth she had been baptised, with her uncle King Edwin, by the Roman missionary Paulinus, which did not, however, prevent her from leaning during her whole life to the side of the Celtic missionaries. Before consecrating her virginity to God, she had lived thirty-three years *very nobly*, says Bede, among her family and her fellow-

[1] "Quæ prima feminarum fertur in provincia Nordanhymbrorum propositum vestemque sanctimonialis habitus, consecrante Ædano episcopo, suscepisse."—Bede, iv. 23. It will be seen farther on whether it is possible to adopt the common opinion which confounds this first Northumbrian nun with St Bega (*St Bees*), the Irish princess, who is mentioned at another place.

citizens. When she understood that God called her, she desired to make to Him a complete sacrifice, and forsook at once the world, her family, and her country.[1] She went into East Anglia, the king of which had married her sister, and whence she designed to cross over to France, in order to take the veil either at Chelles, where her widowed sister was one day to devote herself to God,[2] or in some of the monasteries on the shores of the Marne, which sprang from the great Irish colony of Luxeuil, and whither the Saxon virgins already began to resort.[3] She spent a whole year in preparations for her final exile, but she was not permitted to carry it out. Bishop Aïdan authoritatively recalled her to her own country, and settled her there, obtaining for her a small estate sufficient to support a

[1] "Desiderans exinde, si quo modo posset, derelicta patria et omnibus quæcunque habuerat, in Galliam pervenire. . . . Quo facilius perpetuam in cœlis patriam posset mereri."—BEDE, iv. 23.

[2] Bede seems to imply that Hereswintha, Queen of East Anglia, was already a nun at Chelles, when Hilda wished to take the veil there; which would be an impossibility, as Hilda became Abbess of Hartlepool before Aïdan's death in 651, and her sister could scarcely take the vows before the death of her husband, King Anna, slain in 654. It is then to the close of Hilda's cloister life that Bede's words must apply: "In eodem monasterio soror ipsius Hereswid . . . regularibus subdita disciplinis ipso tempore coronam exspectabat æternam."—Cf. THOMAS ELIENSIS, ap. WHARTON, *Anglia Sacra*, t. i. p. 595. Besides, the Monastery of Chelles, which a vague tradition refers to St Clotilda, was actually founded by the Saxon Bathilda, and she became Queen of Neustria only on her marriage with Clovis II. in 649. Some uncertainty, farther, rests on this Heriswida. Pagi (*Critic. in Baronium ad an.* 680) maintains that she became a nun in 647—seven years before her husband's death. Various English historians give her for husband, not Anna, but one of the brothers of that prince, Ethelher or Edric.

[3] See vol. ii. p. 505.

single family, and situated on the banks of the Wear, a little river which has now become, like the Tyne, one of the greatest arteries of English shipping. There she lived as a nun with a very few companions until Aïdan summoned her to replace the foundress of the Monastery of Hartlepool, where she was invested with the government of a large community.[1]

Hilda, Abbess of Hartlepool. 649.

Nine years later, when the peace and freedom of Northumbria had been secured by the final victory gained by King Oswy over the Mercians, Hilda took advantage of a gift of land sufficient for ten families, which that prince had granted her, to establish a new monastery at Streaneshalch, now Whitby, a little to the south of her ancient abbey, and on the same coast.

Then foundress of Whitby. 658.

Of all the sites chosen by monastic architects, after that of Monte Cassino I know none grander and more picturesque than that of Whitby. It is even, in certain aspects, still more imposing than the Benedictine capital, as being near the sea. The

[1] The original Monastery of Hartlepool, destroyed in the ninth century, like all others on the Northumbrian coast, by the Danes, was not restored, but replaced later by a convent of Franciscans. An ancient church, dedicated to St Hilda, still exists, near which excavations carried on between 1833 and 1843 brought to light several Anglo-Saxon tombs, with the emblems and names of women—*Hildithryth*, *Hildigyth*, *Canngyth*, *Berchtgyd*, *Bregusvid*—which seem to have been those of nuns of the Anglo-Saxon community. The last of these names is that of the mother of Hilda, and several of the others are found in the correspondence of St Boniface with the Saxon nuns. This discovery has given rise to an interesting work, without date or author's name, entitled *Notes on the History of St Begu and St Hild.* Hartlepool.

Esk, which flows through a hilly country, unlike the ordinary levels of England, forms at its mouth a circular bay, commanded on every side by lofty cliffs. On the summit of one of these rocks, 300 feet above the sea, Hilda placed her monastery, on a platform of green and short seaside turf, the sides of which slope abruptly to the northern ocean. From this spot the eye wanders now over the uplands, valleys, and vast heaths of this part of Yorkshire, now along the rough precipices which line the coast, now on the wide horizon of the sea, whose foaming waves break against the perpendicular sides of the great rocky wall which is crowned by the monastery. The dull roar of the tide accords with the sombre tints of the rocks, which are rent and hollowed out by its force; for it is not here, as on the shores of the Channel, where the whiteness of the cliffs has gained the name of Albion for the island of Great Britain. The precipices of the Yorkshire coast are, on the contrary, as dark in colour as they are abrupt and rugged in outline.[1] Nothing now remains of the Saxon monastery: but more than half of the abbey church, restored by the Percies in the time of the Normans, still stands, and enables the marvelling spectator to form to himself an idea of the solemn grandeur of the great edifice. The choir and the

[1] Not so the rocks which border the inner bay formed by the embouchure of the Esk. They are of a brilliant white, and these bright cliffs in the midst of the great black rocks of the coast explain why the Danes, after having destroyed the monastery of Hilda, gave the name of Whitby (*White-by*, white dwelling) to the establishment they created there.

north transept are still complete, and offer one of the most beautiful models of English architecture. The two façades of the east and north, each with three rows of three-pointed windows, are of unrivalled elegance and purity. The beautiful colour of the stone, half worn away by the sea-winds, adds to the charm of these ruins. A more picturesque effect could not be imagined than that of the distant horizon of the azure sea, viewed through the great hollow eyes of the ruinous arches. These majestic relics are now preserved with the respect habitually shown by the English to the monuments of the past; but they cannot always withstand the destroying action of time and the elements. The great central tower fell in 1830. Let the intelligent traveller lose no time, therefore, in visiting one of the oldest and most beautifully situated ruins in Europe, and let him there accord a prayer, or at least a remembrance, to the noble daughter of the Northumbrian kings, who of old erected on this desert rock a pharos of light and peace for the souls of men, by the side of the lighthouse designed to guide the mariners on that stormy sea![1]

[1] The principal details of this monastic church, which is of the beautiful order known as the *Early English*, are perfectly rendered in the magnificent folio published by Edmund Sharpe, an architect, and entitled *Architectural Parallels selected from Abbey Churches*, London, 1848, 121 plates. It was 300 feet long by 70 broad. It is marked by one curious peculiarity; it describes a curve, slightly bending towards the south, so that the door in the western façade is not in an exact line with the central window of the choir. These ruins are now part of a farm belonging to Sir Richard Cholmondeley. The town of Whitby, situated at the foot of these ruins, on the Esk, is a very flourishing seaport, and much frequented by bathers.

The original name, Streaneshalch, signified *The Isle of the Beacon*, and it was probably by this service conferred on the people of the coast that Hilda inaugurated her reign on this promontory; for it was a true reign, temporal as well as spiritual. At Whitby, as at Hartlepool, and during the thirty years that she passed at the head of her two houses, she displayed a rare capacity for the government of souls, and for the consolidation of monastic institutions. This special aptitude, joined to her love of monastic regularity, and her zeal for knowledge and ecclesiastical discipline, gave her an important part to play, and great influence. Her society was sought by Bishop Aïdan, and all the religious who knew her, that they might learn those secrets of divine love and natural wisdom which dwelt in her. The kings even, and princes of her blood, or of the adjacent provinces, often came to consult her, asking enlightenment which they afterwards joyfully acknowledged themselves to have received. But she did not reserve for the great ones of the earth the treasures of her judgment and charity. She scattered around her everywhere the benefits of justice, piety, peace, and temperance. She was ere long regarded and honoured as the mother of her country, and all who addressed her gave her the sweet name of mother, which she so well deserved. Not only in Northumbria, but in distant regions, to which the fame of her virtue and

Her reign of thirty years.

enlightenment had penetrated, she was to many the instrument of their salvation and conversion.[1] And in her two communities especially she secured, during a rule of more than thirty years, the supremacy of order, union, charity, and equality, so much, that it became usual to say to the proud Northumbrians, that the image of the primitive Church, wherein was neither rich nor poor, and where all was common among the Christians, was realised at Whitby.

But the most touching particular of all in the enthusiastic narrative of the venerable Bede, is that which proves the passionate tenderness felt for her by her daughters, especially by the young virgins whom she prepared for religious life in a separate house, by the discipline of a novitiate establishment regularly constituted and attentively superintended.[2]

Nor did the royal abbess confine herself to the

[1] "Quam omnes qui noverant, ob insigne pietatis et gratiæ Matrem vocare consueverant . . . nam et episcopus Aïdan et quique noverant eam religiosi pro insita et sapientia et amore divini famulatus, sedulo eam visitare . . . solebant. . . Regularis vitæ institutioni multum intenta. . . . Tantæ autem erat ipsa prudentiæ, ut non solum mediocres in necessitatibus suis, sed etiam reges ac principes nonnunquam ab ea quærerent consilium et invenirent. . . . Quam omnes qui noverant, ob insigne pietatis et gratiæ Matrem vocare consueverant. . . . Etiam plurimis longe manentibus ad quos felix industriæ ac virtutis ejus rumor pervenit, occasionem salutis et correctionis ministravit."

[2] "Cuidam virginum . . . quæ illam immenso amore diligebat. . . . In extremis monasterii locis seorsum posita ubi nuper venientes ad conversionem feminæ solebant probari, donec regulariter institutæ in societatem congregationis susciperentur."

government of a numerous community of nuns. According to a usage then very general, but principally prevailing in Celtic countries, a monastery was joined to the nunnery. And Hilda inspired the monks subject to her authority with so great a devotion to their rule, so true a love of sacred literature, and so careful a study of the Scriptures, that this monastery, ruled by a woman, became a true school of missionaries and even of bishops.[1] Many ecclesiastical dignitaries, as remarkable for their virtue as for their learning, were sent forth by it;[2] one of whom in particular, St John of Beverley, attained a degree of popularity rare even in England, where the saints were of old so universally and so readily popular.

The cowherd Ceadmon, a vassal of Hilda, the first Anglo-Saxon poet.

But neither the kings nor princes who consulted the great abbess on her sea-girt promontory, nor the bishops, nor even the saints nurtured in her school, occupy in the annals of the human mind, or in the learned researches of our contemporaries, a place comparable to that held by an old cowherd who lived on the lands belonging to Hilda's community, and whose memory is inseparably connected with hers. It is on the lips of this cowherd that the

[1] "Tantum lectioni divinarum Scripturarum suos vacare subditos . . . faciebat, ut facillime viderentur ibidem qui ecclesiasticum gradum, hoc est, altaris officium apte subirent, plurimi posse reperiri."—BEDE, iv. 23.

[2] Bede names six with the highest eulogies—"Quinque episcopos omnes singularis meriti ac sanctitatis viros. . . . Vir strenuissimus et doctissimus, atque excellentis ingenii vocabulo Tatfrid, de ejusdem abbatissæ monasterio electus."

Anglo-Saxon speech first bursts into poetry, and nothing in the whole history of European literature is more original or more religious than this first utterance of the English muse. His name was Ceadmon. He had already reached an advanced age, having spent his life in his humble occupation, without even learning music, or being able to join in the joyous choruses which held such a high place at the feasts and social gatherings of all classes, both poor and rich, among the Anglo-Saxons as among the Celts. When it was his turn to sing at any of these festal meetings, and the harp was handed to him, his custom was to rise from table and go home. One evening, when he had thus withdrawn from his friends, he went back to his humble shed and went to sleep by the side of his cattle. During his slumber he heard a voice, which called him by name and said to him, "Sing me something;" to which he replied, "I cannot sing, and that is why I have left the supper and come here." "Sing, notwithstanding," said the voice. "But what, then, shall I sing?" "Sing the beginning of the world; the creation." Immediately on receiving this command, he began to sing verses, of which before he had no knowledge, but which celebrated the glory and power of the Creator, the eternal God, worker of all marvels, father of the human race, who had given to the sons of men the heavens for their roof, and the earth for their dwelling-place. On awaking, he recollected

all that he had sung in his dream, and hastened to tell all that had happened to him to the farmer in whose service he was.[1]

The Abbess Hilda, when the story was repeated to her, called for Ceadmon and questioned him in the presence of all the learned men whom she could assemble around her. He was made to relate his vision and repeat his songs, and then different passages of sacred history and various points of doctrine were explained to him, that he might put them into verse. The next morning he was again called, and immediately began to recite all that had been told him, in verses which were pronounced to be excellent. He was thus discovered all at once to possess the gift of improvisation in his mother tongue. Hilda and her learned assessors did not hesitate to recognise in this a special gift of God worthy of all respect and of the most tender care. She received Ceadmon and his whole family within the monastic community of Whitby, and afterwards admitted him to the number of monks who were under her rule, and made him carefully translate the whole Bible into Anglo-Saxon. As soon, accordingly, as the sacred history and the gospel were narrated to

[1] "Nonnunquam in convivio cum esset lætitiæ causa decretum ut omnes per ordinem cantare deberent, ille ubi abpropinquare sibi citharam cernebat, surgebat a media cœna. . . . Dum relicta domo convivii egressus esset, ab stabula jumentorum . . . ibique membra dedisset sopori. Cædmon, canta mihi aliquid . . . at ille: Nescio cantare. . . . Canta principium creaturarum."—Bede, iv. 24.

him, he made himself master of the tale, ruminated it, as Bede said, as a clean animal ruminates its food, and transformed it into songs so beautiful that all who listened to him were delighted.[1] He thus put into verse the whole of Genesis and Exodus, with other portions of the Old Testament, and afterwards the life and passion of our Lord and the Acts of the Apostles.

His talent and his poetic faculty thus went on day by day to fuller development, and he devoted numerous songs to such subjects as were best calculated to induce his companions to forsake evil and love and practise the good: the terrors of the last judgment, the pains of hell, the joys of paradise, the action of Divine Providence in the world—all these great and momentous subjects were in their turn woven into his verse. The fragments that remain enable us to estimate the earnest and impassioned inspiration, strongly Christian and profoundly original, which characterised these first efforts of genius, barbarous, but subdued and baptised.

The precursor of Milton.

The Northumbrian cowherd, transformed into a monk of Whitby, sang before the abbess Hilda the revolt of Satan and Paradise Lost a thousand years earlier than Milton, in verses which may still be admired even beside the immortal poem of the

[1] "Ipse cuncta, quæ audiendo discere poterat, rememorando secum et quasi mundum animal ruminando, in carmen dulcissimum convertebat; suaviusque resonando doctores suos vicissim auditores suos faciebat."

British Homer.[1] Notwithstanding Bede's assertion that poetry cannot be translated from one language to another without losing its honour and dignity, we shall borrow from the nervous pen of one of our contemporaries a translation which conveys a just idea of the sombre and wild genius of this truly biblical poet.[2] "Why," says Satan, speaking of God, "should I implore His favour, or bow myself before Him with obedience? I can be a god like Him. Up with me, brave companions who will not fail me in the struggle! brave-hearted warriors who have chosen me for your chief! illustrious soldiers! With such warriors, in truth, one can choose a side; with such combatants one can seize a post. They are my zealous friends, faithful in the warmth of their hearts. I can, as their chief, govern in this kingdom; I have no need to flatter any one; I will be His subject no more!"

He is vanquished, and hurled into the city of

[1] This fragment of Ceadmon's poem on the revolt of Satan, discovered by Archbishop Usher, and printed for the first time in 1655, has been preserved, and frequently published since that date. It has been republished with learned annotations by Dr Bouterweck, *De Cedmone poeta Anglo-Saxonum vetustissimo brevis Dissertatio*, at Elberfeld, 1845. Sir F. Palgrave, one of the most competent critics of English history and literature, justly remarks that there are in this fragment passages so like the *Paradise Lost* that some of Milton's lines read like an almost literal translation. There was an interval of a thousand years between them, Ceadmon dying about 680, and Milton in 1674. Compare SHARON TURNER'S *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, l. iv. c. 3.

[2] "Neque enim possunt carmina, quamvis optime composita, ex alia in aliam linguam ad verbum sine detrimento sui decoris ac dignitatis transferri."

exile—into the abode of groans and hatred—into the hideous eternal night, the darkness of which is broken by smoke and crimson flames. "Is this," he says, "the narrow spot in which my master shuts me up? How different from the dwellings that we know on high in the kingdom of heaven! Oh! if I had the free power of my hands, and if I could issue forth for once, for one winter only, I and my army! But bands of iron surround me—chains bind me down helpless. I am without a kingdom. The fetters of hell shackle me so firmly, clasp me so tightly! Here are huge flames; above and below I have never seen so horrible a place. The fire never languishes—its heat ascends above hell. The rings that encircle me, the manacles that gnaw my flesh, keep me from advancing, and close the way before me; my feet are tied, my hands imprisoned. Thus has God shut me in." Since nothing can be done against Him, it is against His own creature, man, that the enemy must turn. To him who has lost all, revenge is still left; and in securing that, the vanquished may yet be happy and rest placidly even under the weight of the chains with which he is laden.[1]

[1] This translation is borrowed from *L'Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise*, by M. Taine. The author of that work, in which so much talent is mixed up with so many lamentable errors, says very justly of Ceadmon: "Thus is true poetry born. . . . It does but repeat, over and over, one passionate burden. These are the songs of the ancient servants of Odin, now tonsured and wrapt in a monk's frock. Their poetry remains unchanged. They think of God, as of Odin, in a succession of images, brief, crowded, impassioned, like successive flashes of lightning. The Satan of Milton

His holy life.

It would, however, be a totally mistaken idea to recognise in the Abbess Hilda's dependant nothing but a poet or literary pioneer; he was above all a primitive Christian, a true monk, and, in one word, a saint.[1] His mind was mild and humble, simple and pure; he served God with tranquil devotion, grateful for the extraordinary grace that he had received from heaven. But he was so full of zeal for monastic regularity that he opposed with great vehemence the transgressors of the rule—an error for which he seems to have felt some compunctions at the very point of death. No frivolous or worldly subjects ever inspired his verse; he composed his songs only that they might be useful to the soul, and their solemn beauty did even more for the conversion than for the delight of his countrymen. Many were moved by them to despise this world, and to turn with ardent love to the divine life. Many Englishmen after him, says Bede, have tried to compose religious poems; but no one has ever equalled the man who had only God for his master.[2]

exists in that of Ceadmon as a picture exists in a sketch, for both derive their picture from the race, and Ceadmon has found his materials in the warriors of the North, as Milton in the Puritans."

[1] The Bollandists have devoted a special article to him (vol. ii. Feb., p. 552), *De S. Cedmono, cantore theodidacto;* but they make no material addition to what we learn from Bede.

[2] "Erat vir multum religiosus et regularibus disciplinis humiliter subditus. . . . Quadam divina gratia specialiter insignis. . . . Quicquid ex divinis litteris per interpretes disceret hoc ipse post pusillum. . . . Verbis poeticis maxima suavitate et compunctione compositis in sua, id est, Anglorum, lingua proferret. . . . Alii post illum in gente Anglorum re-

His gentle death. About 680.

He died as poets seldom die. At the very beginning of his illness he desired his bed to be made in that part of the infirmary which was assigned to the dying, and while smiling and talking cheerfully with his brethren, asked for the *viaticum*. At the moment when he was about to administer the communion to himself, according to the usage of the period, and while holding in his hands the holy eucharist, he asked all those who were round him if any one had any grudge against him, or any complaint to make. All answered, No. Then said he, "I too, my children, have a mind at peace with all God's servants." A little after he had made his communion, as they were about to awaken the monks for matins, he made the sign of the cross, laid his head on the pillow, and fell asleep in silence, to awake no more.[1]

Apart from the interest which attaches to Ceadmon from a historical and literary point of view, his life discloses to us essential peculiarities in the outward organisation and intellectual life of those

ligiosa poemata facere tentabant, sed ei nullus æquiparari potuit; non ab hominibus . . . sed divinitus adjutus gratis canendi donum accepit. . . . Unde nihil unquam frivoli et supervacui poematis facere potuit; sed ea tantummodo quæ ad religionem pertinent. . . . Simplici ac pura mente tranquillaque devotione Domino servierat."—BEDE, l. c.

[1] "In proxima casa, in qua infirmiores et qui prope morituri esse videbantur, induci solebant. . . . Cum ibidem positus vicissim aliquo gaudente animo, una cum eis qui ibidem ante inerant, loqueretur et jocaretur. . . . *Et tamen*, ait, *afferte mihi eucharistiam.* Qua accepta in manu, interrogavit si omnes placidum erga se animum et sine querela controversiæ ac rancoris haberent. . . . Sicque se cœlesti muniens viatico . . . reclinavit caput ad cervical, modicumque obdormiens, ita cum silentio vitam finivit."

great communities which in the seventh century studded the coast of Northumbria, and which, with all their numerous dependants, found often a more complete development under the crosier of such a woman as Hilda than under superiors of the other sex. It is apparent that admission to the benefits of monastic protection and shelter was not confined to isolated monks, but was extended to whole families.[1] And the example of Hilda also discloses how earnest was the desire of the superiors of monasteries to instruct the ignorant masses, and to familiarise them, by instruction in the vulgar tongue, or by poetic paraphrases, with Holy Scripture and Christian doctrine.

Ebba, princess of Bernicia, becomes Abbess of Coldingham.

Whitby, with its lighthouse and its great monastery, was the most southerly place of refuge on that Northumbrian coast, still so formidable to sailors, which at that time was lined with so many sanctuaries. At the northern extremity of the same coast, beyond Lindisfarne, on what is now the frontier of Scotland, at Coldingham, rose also, as at Whitby, two monasteries—the one for men and the other for women—both founded and governed by one abbess. While Hilda, the Deïrian princess, ruled her monasteries on the shores of her father's kingdom, Ebba, a princess of the rival dynasty, granddaughter of Ida the Burner, daughter of Ethelfrid the Ravager, but sister of the

[1] "Susceptum in monasterium cum omnibus suis fratrum cohorti adsociavit."—BEDE, l. c.

sainted King Oswald, and of Oswy the reigning king, formed on the sea-coast of Bernicia another monastic centre, which was yet to hold an important position, and to work out a stormy history. It had been the intention of her brother to give her in marriage to the king of Scots—a union meant undoubtedly to strengthen or to re-establish the alliance of the restored family of Ethelfrid with the Scottish dynasty which had offered the exiles such generous hospitality during the reign of Edwin, the chief of the race by which they had been exiled. Ebba, however, was obstinately opposed to this marriage. Her family had all embraced, during their banishment, the principles of the Christian faith, and it was now her desire to advance to the practice of the counsels of the Gospel. It was not from the hands of Aïdan, but from those of Finan, his successor at Lindisfarne, that she received the veil:[1] Oswy left her at liberty to devote herself to God, and gave her a piece of land on the banks of the Derwent where she might found her first monastery, which received the name of Ebba's Castle.[2] But the principal scene of her activities was Coldingham, in a situation which she seems to have chosen in emulation of that of Whitby. Her great and famous monastery was built, not on the spot now called by her

[1] *Act. SS. Bolland.*, vol. v. August, p. 197.

[2] Ebbæ-Castrum, whence Ebbchester, a village in the county of Durham.

name,[1] but on the summit of an isolated promontory which still bears the title of St Abb's Head, or Cape, and which abruptly terminates the range of the Lammermoors, thrusting itself out into the German Ocean. From this headland, or rather precipice, which rises perpendicularly for more than 500 feet from the level of the sea, the view embraces, on the north, the Scotch coast to the farther side of the Forth, and, on the south, the English coast as far as the holy isle of Lindisfarne and the royal acropolis of Bamborough. A small ruined chapel is all that remains to mark the site of the great sanctuary of Ebba, who was, like Hilda, placed at the head of a double community of men and of women, and presided over the religious life of northern Northumbria with no less success, and for an equal length of time, taking her part, also during nearly thirty years, with no less authority in the affairs of her country.[2]

She also reigns for thirty years. 650-683.

She did not always succeed, however, in maintaining amongst her daughters the fervour and the regularity of which she herself gave an example. That relaxation of discipline from which, by a mysterious and terrible judgment of God, the religious orders have never been able to preserve themselves, and which was destined to invade so speedily the

[1] It owes this name to a priory founded by a colony of monks from Durham in 1098, and very richly endowed by the kings of Scotland.

[2] "Sanctimonialis femina et mater ancillarum Christi, nomine Ebba, regens monasterium . . . religione pariter et nobilitate cunctis honorabilis."—Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 10.

Anglo-Saxon cloisters, made its way into Coldingham even during the lifetime of the foundress. She was warned of this by a holy priest of her community who had come from Ireland with the other Celtic missionaries, and who was called Adamnan, like the historian and successor of Columba at Iona. As he went with the abbess through the vast and lofty buildings which she had erected upon her promontory, he said to her with tears, "All that you see here, so beautiful and so grand, will soon be laid in ashes." And as the astonished princess exclaimed against his prophecy, "Yes," continued he; "I have seen in my vigils an unknown one who has revealed to me all the evil that is done in this house, and the punishment that is prepared for it. He has told me that he has visited each cell and each bed, and that everywhere he has found the monks and the nuns either wrapt in a shameful sleep, or awake to do evil. These cells, intended for prayer or for study, are made use of sometimes for irregular repasts, sometimes for senseless gossip and other frivolities. The virgins, consecrated to God, employ their leisure in weaving garments of excessive fineness, either to attire themselves as if they were the brides of men, or to bestow them on strangers. For this the vengeance of heaven will send fire to consume the place and chastise its inhabitants." It is evident that these scandals were not by any means so serious as many that occurred elsewhere and at a later

Disorders noted in the community of Coldingham, by the monk Adamnan.

period; but in the midst of the general fervour of the new Christians of England they seemed to deserve fire from heaven. Ebba, thus warned, did what she could to amend the state of affairs, and the fire which devastated for the first time her great community did not break out till after her death.[1]

Fervour and austerity of the Northumbrian monks.

It is right to give this incident with some minuteness, for it is the only symptom of decay which we have discovered in the period. With this one exception, no cloud, of which history has preserved any record, obscures the renown of the regular clergy of Northumbria. The universal admiration won for the monastic capital of Lindisfarne by the regularity, the fervour, and the extraordinary austerity of its numerous inhabitants, is proved by all witnesses as with one voice. Their fasts, which came to them by tradition and obliga-

[1] "Cuncta hæc quæ cernis ædificia publica vel privata, in proximo est ut ignis absumens in cinerem convertat. . . . Singulorum casas ac lectos inspexi . . . omnes et viri et feminæ aut somno torpent inerti, aut ad peccata vigilant. Nam et domunculæ quæ ad orandum vel legendum factæ erant, nunc in commissationum, potationum, fabulationum et cæterarum sunt illecebrarum cubilia conversæ, virgines . . . quotiescunque vacant, texendis subtilioribus indumentis operam dant. . . . Post obitum abbatissæ redierunt ad pristinas sordes, immo sceleratiora fecerunt."—Bede, iv. 25. Honest Bede, always so careful in stating the source of his narratives, does not fail to tell us that he had these details from a priest of Coldingham, who, after the fire, fled for refuge to the Monastery of Yarrow, in which the author of the *Ecclesiastical History of the English* composed his work. Let us add that regular discipline was promptly re-established in Ebba's monastery, and that in the following century, at the invasion of the Danes in 870, the nuns, in order that they might not attract the passion of these barbarians, cut off their noses and lips; thus, in saving their honour, winning the glory of martyrdom.

tion from Ireland, excited special wonder—fasts very much more meritorious in that raw, damp climate, than those of the fathers of the desert under the burning sky of the East, and which contrasted strangely with the habitual voracity of the Anglo-Saxons, whose sons began to people Lindisfarne and its dependencies. In Ireland the Cenobites, and especially the Anchorites, frequently lived on bread and water alone.[1] Two centuries later, a German[2] monk related to his wondering countrymen that the usage of the Scotic monks who inhabited Ireland was to fast all the year round, except on Sundays and feast-days, and never to eat before nones or vespers. Bishop Aïdan induced all the communities of monks and nuns in Northumbria to adopt the fast which he observed himself—namely, to eat nothing before nones on the Wednesdays and Fridays of every week, except those between Easter and Pentecost.[3] At Lindisfarne, for more than a century, wine and beer were totally unknown; and the first relaxation of this severity was introduced in favour of a king of Northumbria who became a monk there in 737.[4]

Elsewhere these customs were improved upon by still more notable austerities. At Coldingham, the Adamnan of whom we recently spoke, expiated a youthful fault by taking food only twice

[1] Bede, v. 12.
[2] Ratramnus Corbeiensis, *Contra Græcos*, lib. iv.
[3] Bede, iii. 5.
[4] Roger Hoveden, ap. Lingard, i. 227.

a-week, on Sundays and Thursdays, while, at the same time, he often passed the whole night in vigils. He adopted this system from remorse and fear of God, but the love of God at last transformed it into a delight.[1] At Melrose, a monk was held in veneration who, having fallen into a trance, had one of those visions of heaven and hell which made many of the Celtic monks precursors of Dante. It was his custom to plunge into the waters of the Tweed which flowed by the monastery, to pray there, and that even when the river was covered with ice, which he had to break before he could enter the stream. "Brother Drychthelme," some one called to him from the bank, "how can you bear such cold?" "I have seen it harder and colder," he quietly answered.[2]

A forerunner of Dante.

When a new monastery was to be founded, the Celtic missionaries and the monks trained in their school thought they could not better inaugurate it than by redoubling their fervour and austerity. The son of the sainted King Oswald, who held a kind of provincial royalty in Deïra, determined to

Foundation of Lastingham. 648-660.

[1] "Quod causa divini timoris semel ob reatum compunctus cœperat, jam causa divini amoris delectatus præmiis indefessus agebat."—BEDE, iv. 25.

[2] "De fluentibus circa eum semifractarum crustis glacierum, quas et ipse contriverat quo haberet locum standi sive immergendi in fluvio. . . . Mirum, frater Drychthelme, quod tantam frigoris asperitatem ultra rationem tolerare prævales. . . . Frigidiora ego vidi . . . austeriora ego vidi."—BEDE, v. 12. Bede is careful to mention, as he always does when he relates his marvels, that he has the story from a certain Irish monk, who, as well as the wise Northumbrian King Aldfrid, had often visited and conversed with this Drychthelme.

establish a monastery where he might hear the word of God, and, above all, where he might be buried, and be benefited after his death by the powerful help of the prayers of those who served God in that place. For this purpose he applied to a monk of Lindisfarne, who had become a missionary bishop among the Saxons of the East, persuading him to accept one of his estates as an endowment. This man of God—Cedd by name—chose a spot among the mountains as difficult of access as possible, and which seemed fit rather for the haunt of bandits or wild beasts than of men. He then proceeded to purify the spot he had selected by prayer and fasting, and asked leave from the king to remain there in prayer the whole of Lent. During this retreat he fasted every day except Sunday till evening, and then took only a little bread, an egg, and some milk and water. Such, said he, was the custom of those from whom he had learnt the rules of monastic discipline ;[1] and such was the beginning of the Monastery of Lastingham, between York and Whitby, which was established on the model of Lindisfarne. We shall hereafter see its abbots holding an hon-

[1] "Ne tunc quidem nisi panis permodicum, et unum ovum gallinaceum cum parvo lacte aquæ mixto percipiebat. Dicebat hanc esse consuetudinem eorum a quibus normam disciplinæ regularis didicerat. . . . Expleto studio jejuniorum et orationis, fecit ibi monasterium . . . et religiosis moribus, juxta ritus Lindisfarmensium ubi educatus erat, instituit." —Bede, iii. 23. Whence we can see, says Fleury, that in that country neither milk, nor even eggs, were forbidden in Lent.—*Hist. Eccl.*, l. xxxix. c. 4.

ourable place in the annals of the Church of England.[1]

Testimony borne by Bede to the virtues of the Celtic missionaries.

Let us quote once more, in evidence of the virtues of the monks and bishops who converted the north of England, the unquestionable testimony of the celebrated historian, who was at once their adversary and their successor, but who, notwithstanding his dislike, and his strangely exaggerated description of their special peculiarities, yet rendered to the services and virtues of the Celtic missionaries that signal homage which generous hearts delight to accord to the vanquished whom they honour. "The greatness of their disinterestedness and self-denial was very apparent," says Bede, "after their retreat." At Lindisfarne and elsewhere they had only such buildings as were absolutely necessary for existence and decency.[2] They had neither money nor cattle: what the rich gave them they immediately distributed to the poor. They did not consider themselves bound to receive with splendour the lords and nobles who came to their monasteries for the sole purposes of prayer and to hear the word of God. Kings themselves, when they came to Lindisfarne, brought no more than five or six attendants with them, and contented themselves with the ordinary fare of the brethren. These apostles desired to serve God only, and not the

[1] There is still to be seen at Lastingham a beautiful church, believed to be one of the oldest in England.

[2] "Paucissimæ domus . . . illæ solummodo sine quibus conversatio civilis esse nullatenus poterat."—BEDE, iii. 26.

world—they sought to win men through the heart only, not through the stomach. Thus the monkish frock was held in great veneration. Wherever a clerk or a monk appeared he was received with welcome as a true servant of God. Those who met him by the way hastened to bow their heads before him and receive his benediction. Their discourses were listened to by attentive crowds. Every Sunday these crowds flowed into the churches of the monasteries, to gather there the seed of life. As soon as a priest appeared in a village, all the inhabitants clustered round him begging him to preach to them. The priests and clerks travelled through the country only to preach, to baptise, to visit the sick, to save souls. They were so entirely free from all desire of gain, that the princes and nobles had to force them to accept the lands and estates necessary for the founding of monasteries.[1]

Opposition and resistance are not wanting.

It is not, however, to be supposed, that the conversion of Northumbria and of the six other kingdoms of the Heptarchy was carried through without hindrance and convulsions. The monastic historians have made the mistake of dwelling too lightly on the resistance and the revolts which their heroes had to encounter, and which added so much to the merit of what they achieved in the sight of God, as well as in that of man. But enough is visible to enable us easily to fill up what they have

[1] "Tota enim tunc fuit sollicitudo doctoribus illos, Deo serviendi, non sæculo ; tota cura cordis excolendi, non ventris."—BEDE, iii. 26.

left untold. During the two centuries which separate the arrival of Augustine from the accession of Egbert, the perpetual conflict of the savage and uncontrollable nature of the Saxon kings with their new faith and the authority of the bishops and monks, is apparent. Changeable as Proteus, we see them constantly escaping by abrupt changes from all the efforts made to obtain a salutary influence over them. The king who to-day distinguished himself by the fervour of his devotions, and his munificence to the new establishments, would to-morrow abandon himself to all the debaucheries and excesses suggested, or pardoned, by heathen instinct. Others sought in the very monasteries, and among the virgins consecrated to God, a prey attractive beyond all other to their ungovernable sensuality. Intestine wars, usurpation, murder, pillage, abominable tortures, violence, and spoliation of every kind, sully at every turn the pages which have preserved to us so many pious and touching incidents. And it was not the kings and chiefs only that were hard to win: the people presented the same difficulties, the same disappointments. In vain the holy bishops and monks, produced so rapidly and in such numbers by the Saxon race, endeavoured to win souls and purify them by an exhaustless charity, bestowing with free hands on the poor all the treasures that they received from the rich. Frequently the revolt was open, and the apostle of a district

Contrasts and uncertainty of character among the kings.

And among the people.

found himself obliged to fly into solitude or exile, there to await the dawn of better days. Sometimes an unforeseen calamity, famine or pestilence, sufficed to convulse the minds of a people, who then in a body would abjure the faith of Christ, and return to their ancient gods. On one side the monks had to struggle without intermission against old customs, which all their zeal could not avail to extirpate, — against the inveterate belief in witchcraft, against the practice of the slave trade, with all its refinements of greed and debauchery ;[1] while, on the other, dull resistance, murmurs, and threats accompanied the work of salvation.

On the north-east coast of England, where the Celtic missionaries had just founded such illustrious monasteries, certain tribes of the coast took vows for their destruction. Bede himself, from whom we have just borrowed so striking a picture of the popularity which surrounded them in Northumbria, forgot, in that description, various particulars which he has recorded elsewhere. It is he who tells how, when the little vessels of the monks, abroad in foul weather, ran the risk of being swamped at the mouth of the Tyne, a crowd of spectators assembled on the shore exulting in their danger, mocking at their self-devotion, and crying with savage irony— "Well done! this will teach them to live differently from everybody else. Perish the fools who would

Joy of the people of the coast at seeing the monks ship-wrecked.

[1] Turner, *op. cit.*, book vii. c. 9, p. 53.

take our ancient customs from us, imposing new ones, which God knows how we can observe!"[1]

Nevertheless, truth and goodness conquered everything. In the long run the humble courage and generous perseverance of the missionaries triumphed over the fury, cunning, and opposition of fallen nature in these children of barbarism. The soldiers of Christ,[2] as from that time the monks were called, remained masters of the field of battle.

[1] "Stabat in altera amnis ripa vulgaris turba non modica . . . cœpit irridere vitam conversationis eorum, quasi merito talia paterentur, qui communia mortalia jura spernentes, nova et ignota darent statuta vivendi. . . . Rustico et animo et ore stomachantes. . . . Nullus, inquiunt, hominum pro eis roget, nullus eorum misereatur Deus, et qui veteres culturas hominibus tulere, et novæ qualiter observari debeant nemo novit." —BEDE, *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 3. This anecdote refers to the time when Cuthbert, though he had reached the age of adolescence, was not yet a monk. He became a monk at fifteen. He was born in 637. It was, therefore, about 650 or 651, and exactly at the time of the great Northumbrian foundations at Hartlepool, &c.

[2] "Milites Christi."—BOLLAND., t. ii. Jun., p. 236.

CHAPTER III.

PROPAGATION OF CHRISTIANITY BY THE KINGS AND MONKS OF NORTHUMBRIA.—FINAL TRIUMPH OF NORTHUMBRIA UNDER OSWY.

Influence of the three Northumbrian Bretwaldas and their Celtic clergy on the other kingdoms of the Heptarchy.

1. *East Anglia.*—Vicissitudes of Christianity.—The king, converted by Edwin, is assassinated.—His brother, exiled in France, returns a convert with the missionary bishop, Felix.—The king and the bishop evangelise East Anglia.—Supposed origin of Cambridge.—The Irish monk, Fursy, assists in their work.—The visions which make him a forerunner of Dante.—King Sigebert becomes a monk; he issues from his cloister to fight, armed with a staff, against Penda; and dies on the field of battle.—A king-monk among the Cambrians perishes in the same way fighting against the Saxons.—Anna, the successor of Sigebert, is, like him, killed by Penda.
2. *Wessex.*—Christianity is brought hither by King Oswald and the Italian bishop, Birinus.—Oswald, son-in-law and godfather of the King of the West Saxons.—Popular verses about Birinus.—The son of the first Christian king, who had continued a heathen, and had been dethroned by Penda, is converted during exile; re-established in Wessex, he summons thither as bishop a Frank who had been educated among the Celts, but afterwards desires a bishop acquainted with Anglo-Saxon.—Foundation of Malmesbury and of Winchester.—An English abbot at Glastonbury.—The Anglo-Saxons begin to occupy the episcopal sees.—A West Saxon becomes the first English Archbishop of Canterbury.—Ercombert, King of Kent, destroys the idols.
3. *Essex.*—King Oswy converts his friend Sigebert, King of Essex, baptised by Finan in the villa of the Northumbrian king.—A monk of Lindisfarne becomes Bishop of London.—The first Christian king of Essex killed by his cousin, because he is too ready to forgive.—The first bishop dies of the plague, and thirty of his friends go to die on

his tomb.—Relapse of the East Saxons into idolatry. A new king and a new bishop, educated by the Celts, bring them back to the faith.

4. *Mercia.*—Influence of the King of Northumbria and of the Bishop of Lindisfarne on the conversion of the Mercians.—The son of King Oswy, married to a daughter of the King of Mercia, converts the brother of his wife, and marries him to his sister.—The Celtic missionaries in Mercia.—Unexpected tolerance of the ferocious Penda towards his son and his converted subjects. But he continues his devastations in Northumbria.—Last conflict between him and Oswy.—Battle of Windwaëd.—Defeat and death of Penda, the last hero of Saxon Paganism.—Oswy offers his daughter to God in acknowledgment of the victory, and founds twelve monasteries.—Final triumph of the Northumbrians and of Christianity.—Conquest and conversion of Mercia.—Its first five bishops issue from Celtic cloisters.—Opposition of the monks of Bardeney to the worship of St Oswald.—The Mercians, revolting against the Northumbrians, nevertheless remain Christians.

Summary.—Of eight Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, one only is exclusively converted by the Roman missionaries; four are converted by the Celtic monks alone; and two by the combined action of the Celts and of bishops sent from Rome.—Sussex alone remains to be won, where a Celtic colony resides without influence.

The extension of Christianity by the Celtic monks of Northumbria in the other kingdoms of the Heptarchy.

From the cloisters of Lindisfarne, and the heart of those districts in which the popularity of ascetic pontiffs such as Aïdan, and martyr kings such as Oswald and Oswin, took day by day a deeper root, Northumbrian Christianity spread over the southern kingdoms. Whether this gradual invasion is to be attributed to the preponderating influence of the last three Bretwaldas, all Christians and Northumbrians, or simply to the expansive force of Celtic missionary labour, can never be discriminated. But what is distinctly visible is the influence of Celtic priests and missionaries everywhere replacing or seconding the Roman missionaries, and reaching districts which their predecessors had

never been able to enter. The stream of the divine word thus extended itself from north to south, and its slow but certain course reached in succession all the peoples of the Heptarchy. Life and light infused themselves through all, and everywhere, along with the immaculate sacrifice, the hymns of a people freed from the yoke of idolatry rose towards the living God.

Let us state rapidly the progress of the pacific invasion made by the Celtic monks, trained in the school of the great Columba, into the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms south of the Humber.[1]

I.

CONVERSION OF EAST ANGLIA.

Vicissitudes of Christianity in East Anglia.

We have seen how Edwin, the first Christian Bretwalda of Northumbria, employed his influence over the country where he had spent his exile to convert the king of East Anglia. Unfortunately this first conversation had not been more durable than that of Northumbria itself under Edwin. Eorpwald, the Christian king, had been assassinated soon after his conversion,[2] and this important kingdom, which comprehended so large a part of eastern England, fell back into idolatry. The singular law which

[1] In order to a full understanding of this chapter, the maps must be consulted.

[2] In preference to the chronology of Bede's annotators, I follow, as far as regards East Anglia, that of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, which is also adopted by the Bollandists in the Life of St Felix (vol. i. Mart., p. 780).

made exile the cradle of the faith and the apprenticeship of royalty to so many Anglo-Saxon princes, appears among the Angles of the East as well as among those of the North. Sigebert, the brother of the murdered king, exiled in France from his youth, was there baptised, and there too had come to admire and understand monastic life. Recalled to reign over his own country, he brought thither with him at once the true faith and the life of the cloister. He was accompanied by a Burgundian bishop of the name of Felix, who placed himself under the jurisdiction of Honorius, Archbishop of Canterbury, and was by him appointed missionary bishop of the East Angles.[1] For seventeen years this foreign bishop diligently sowed the seed of eternal life in his new diocese.[2] As in Northumbria, the king and the bishop laboured in concert to extend religion and also Christian instruction, for they founded several schools for the literary education of the young English, in imitation of those that Sigebert had seen in France, and which Felix provided with masters obtained from the great monastic school of Canterbury.[3] The origin of

636.

King Sigebert and Bishop Felix.

[1] The seat of this bishopric was first established at Dunwich, then, that town having been ingulfed by the sea, was transferred successively to Elmham, to Thetford, and finally to Norwich, where it still exists.

[2] "Totam illam provinciam juxta sui nominis sacramentum, a longa iniquitate atque infelicitate liberatam, ad fidem et opera justitiæ ac perpetuæ felicitatis dona perduxit."—Bede, iii. 15.

[3] "Ea quæ in Gallia bene disposita vidit imitari cupiens. . . . Pædagogos ac magistros juxta morem Cantuariorum."—Bede, iii. 18. Cf. Wilhel. Malmesb.; Florent. Wigorn; Henric. Huntingd; Bolland., t. ii. Mart., p. 781.

the celebrated University of Cambridge has been attributed by many to these monastic schools. Origin of the University of Cambridge.

But they were not content to imitate Northumbria at a distance: they entered into close relations with the new Celtic mission of that kingdom. The holy bishop Aïdan became the object of the respectful emulation of the Burgundian Felix, who, like him, had come from across the seas to evangelise the English, and who was encouraged in his respect for the Celtic abbot by the example of the Archbishop Honorius himself, notwithstanding Aïdan's obstinate attachment to Celtic custom in respect to the celebration of Easter as opposed to the Roman usage, of which the metropolitan church of Canterbury was the natural guardian in England.[1]

Ere long a Celtic missionary appeared to assist in the joint work of the king and the bishop. This was an Irish monk, named Fursy, of very noble birth, and celebrated from his youth in his own country for his knowledge and his visions. It would be pleasant, to follow the example of Bede, to pause in the tale, and leave the vicissitudes of missionary history in England, to repose ourselves for a little amidst the wonderful revelations of this famed precursor of Dante. Bede had his The Irish monk Fursy. 638-650.

[1] "Hæc dissonantia paschalis observantiæ, vivente Ædano, patienter ab omnibus tolerebatur. . . . Ab omnibus etiam qui de pascha aliter sentiebant, merito diligebatur . . . ab ipsis quoque episcopis Honorio Cantuariorum et Felice Orientalium Anglorum venerationi habitus est."—Bede, iii. 25.

account of these visions from an old East Anglian monk of his community, as pious as he was truthful, who had heard the Irish saint himself recount his visions. Their character was such that this wonderful man, though but scarcely covered by a thin garment during the rude winters of that English coast, frozen by the east winds, was covered with perspiration at the bare recollection of the moving and frightful trances which his spirit had passed through.[1]

Fursy's visions of the punishments of hell.

In the chief of these visions, which Ampère and Ozanam agree in regarding as one of the poetic sources of the *Divina Commedia*, the Irish monk was permitted to contemplate the chastisements reserved for the most abominable sins of his times. "Look," said an angel to him—"look on these four fires that consume the world: the fire of falsehood, for those who renounce the promises of their baptism; the fire of avarice, for those who prefer this world's riches to the love of Heaven; the fire of discord, for those who fear not to injure souls for trifling cause; the fire of impiety, for those who scruple not to spoil and defraud the lowly and the feeble."[2]

[1] "De nobilissimo genere Scotorum. . . . Superest adhuc frater senior monasterii nostri qui narrare solet. . . . Adjiciam quia tempus hiemis erat acerrimum et glacie constrictum, cum sedens in tenui veste vir, ita inter dicendum propter multitudinem memorati timoris vel suavitatis, quasi ut media æstatis caumate sudaverat."

[2] "Hi sunt quatuor ignes qui mundum succendunt. . . . Tertius dissentionis, cum animos proximorum etiam in supervacuis rebus offendere non formidant. Quartus impietatis, cum infirmiores exspoliare et eis fraudem facere pronihilo ducunt."—*Act. SS. O. S. B.*, t. iii. p. 289.

This Irish monk came into East Anglia, as he had gone to other countries, to serve God in preaching the Gospel; but one of his visions determined him to remain here longer than was usual to him. The eloquence of his words and the example of his virtues contributed much to the conversion of the heathen, and the confirmation of the Christians in their new faith.[1] King Sigebert received him with great respect, and gave him a large estate surrounded with wood and near the sea, where he might found a monastery. The buildings and wealth of this foundation were afterwards much agumented by the kings and nobles of East Anglia.[2]

At a later period, King Sigebert, who was not only a great Christian and a great philosopher for his time, but also a great warrior, harassed with the contests and troubles of his earthly royalty, resolved to occupy himself no longer with any occupation save the things of the kingdom of heaven, nor to fight except for the King Eternal.[3] Accordingly he received the tonsure, and entered as a monk the monastery which he had bestowed on his Celtic friend, the Irish Fursy.[4] He thus

King Sigebert becomes a monk.

[1] "Cupiens pro Domino, ubicumque sibi opportunum inveniret peregrinam ducere vitam. Angelica visione admonitus cœpto verbi ministerio sedulus insistere."—BEDE, iii. 19.

[2] At Burghcastle, in the present county of Suffolk.

[3] "Vir per omnia christianissimus atque doctissimus. . . . Tantumque rex ille cœlestis regni amator factus est, ut ad ultimum relictis regni negotiis . . . atque accepta tonsura pro æterno rege militare curaret."—BEDE, ii. 16; iii. 18.

[4] "S. Furseo dedit locum ad construendum monasterium, in quo et ipse post modum relicto regno monachus factus est."—GERVAS. DOROB.,

set the first example, among the Anglo-Saxons, of a king abandoning secular life and sovereignty to enter the cloister; and, as we shall see, his example was not fruitless.

But he was not permitted to die as he hoped in the cloister. The terrible Penda, that scourge of the Saxon confederation, and unwearied leader of the heathen, hated his Christian neighbours in the east as well as those of the north. At the head of his numerous Mercians, reinforced by the implacable British, he invaded and ravaged East Anglia with as much fury and success as had attended him in Northumbria. The East Angles, terrified and very inferior in numbers, recollecting the exploits of their old king, sought Sigebert in his cell to place him at the head of their army, his valour and warlike experience being well known to the soldiers. It was in vain to resist; he could not but yield to the solicitations of his former subjects: but that he might remain faithful to his recent vows he armed himself only with a staff, not with a sword. His devotion was useless; all that he could do was to die for his faith and his country. It was thus, with his staff in his hand, that the king-monk perished at the head of his troops under the sword of the enemy.[1]

He dies fighting for his country. 635.

Act. Pont. Cantuar., p. 1636. But Bede says that he entered a monastery *quod sibi fecerat*, and which is supposed to have been that which has since been known by the name of St Edmundsbury.—Cf. *Liber Elieusis*, p. 14, ed. 1848.

[1] "Sperantes minus animos militum trepidare, præsente duce quon-

We may appropriately recall here an incident altogether analogous to this Saxon king's self-sacrifice, the hero of which was a British king fighting against the Saxons. Both had become monks, and were forced in their own despite to leave the cloister and die on the battle-field. Both are too closely connected with our subject to be passed over in silence.

Like Sigebert, the king-monk Teudric falls in battle, but against the Saxons.

Thirty years before the sacrifice of the king of East Anglia—about the year 610—Teudric, a valiant Welsh king, conqueror in all the battles waged during his reign, abdicated the throne in order to prepare by a period of penitence for death. He concealed himself in an islet formed by the picturesque course of the Wye, in the wild and solitary spot to which the more recent ruins of the Cistercian abbey of Tintern have attracted crowds of sight-seers. But in the reign of his son, the Saxons of Wessex, under King Ceolwulf, crossed the Severn, which had formed their boundary for more than a century, and ravaged the country as far as the Wye. At his people's cry of distress the generous old man left the solitude where he had lived for ten years, and once more led the Christians of Wales to battle with the Pagan Saxons. He awaited the latter at the ford by which they meant to cross the river which bathed the banks of his solitude. A brilliant victory was the reward of his

dam strenuissino et eximio, sed ipse professionis suæ non immemor."—BEDE, l. c.

generous devotion. At the mere sight of the old king, armed at all points and mounted on his war-horse, a panic spread among the Saxons, long accustomed to fly before him; but in the flight one of them turned back and gave him a mortal blow. He perished thus in the arms of victory, his skull split open by a Saxon sword. A thousand years afterwards his heroic remains and venerated relics were identified by means of this shattered skull in the stone coffin wherein his faithful followers had buried him, at the confluence of the Severn and the Wye, six miles distant from the battle-field on which he gave up his life for the safety of his country.[1]

King Anna, successor of Sigebert, killed, like him, by Penda. 635-654.

Anna, Sigebert's successor, sprung like him from the race of Uffa, who founded the East Anglian kingdom, had a longer and less stormy reign. Like Sigebert, he was the zealous helper of Felix and Fursy, the Burgundian bishop and the Celtic monk, in the work of converting his kingdom. Like him, he founded numerous monasteries, and like him had the honour to die fighting for his people, invaded and decimated by the hateful Penda. Though he did not become a monk like Sigebert, he left a numerous offspring destined to adopt the life of the cloister, and thus to expiate the guilty weakness of his brother, who succeeded him, and

[1] F. Godwin, *De Præsulibus Angliæ*, p. 593, ap. Lingard, vol. i. p. 152; Lappenberg, p. 54; *Liber Landavensis*, p. 133, 134; La Borderie, *op. cit.*, p. 54, who refers this occurrence to the year 575, while Lappenberg fixes it, after an Anglo-Saxon chronicler, on the 3d January 610.

who, although himself a Christian, became the ally of the heathen Penda in his attacks upon the Christians of Northumbria.[1]

II.

CONVERSION OF WESSEX.

Christianity carried to the Saxons of the West by King Oswald and Bishop Birinus.

What Edwin had been to the Angles of the East, his saintly and generous successor, Oswald, was to the Saxons of the West, who under Cerdic, one of those bloodthirsty and warlike chiefs who were said to descend in a direct line from the great god Odin, had founded the most western colony of the Saxon immigration, a colony which had become a kingdom of much vaster extent than the kingdoms of the eastern or southern Saxons, or that of the Jutes of Kent. This realm, which extended from the Thames to the Severn, condemned by its position to endless struggles with the Britons of Wales and of Cornwall—a race always thrilling with patriotic hatred of the invader, and des-

[1] Fursy, after having founded in East Anglia various double communities of monks and nuns according to the Celtic usage (*De Virtutibus S. Fursci*, ap. MABILLON, *Act. SS. O. S. B.*, vol. ii. p. 296), quitted the cenobitic life in order to become an anchorite. Then seeing East Anglia more and more ravaged by the incursions of the heathens of Mercia, he decreed the dissolution of his communities and departed to France, where he was well received at the court of Clovis II., that great protector of the Irish monks. He there founded the Monastery of Lagny, and died in 650. We have already spoken of him among the successors of St Columbanus in France, and we shall find his brother and his disciples among the Irish missionaries in Belgium.

tined in the future to absorb the seven other kingdoms of the Heptarchy[1]—was governed in the time of Oswald by two brothers, Cuichelm, from whose attempt at assassination Edwin had barely escaped, and Cynegils, the father of a princess whom Oswald had asked in marriage. When Oswald came in person for his bride, he met at the residence of the King of Wessex a missionary called Birinus.[2] This bishop—who was perhaps not a monk, and whose origin is unknown—had acquired the Saxon language at Genoa, a port much frequented by the Anglo-Saxons, where the bishop of the place had consecrated him. He had been commissioned by Pope Honorius I. to continue the work of the conversion of the Saxons, and had promised in return that he would sow the seed of life even beyond the territory of the Angles, where no preacher had yet penetrated. But landing on the coast of Wessex,[3] he found the population there, which no doubt he supposed to be already Christianised, still plunged in the darkness of
634. utter Paganism, and devoted himself to their conversion, believing this to be the best way of keeping his promise.[4]

[1] "Britannos antiquæ libertatis conscientia frementes, et ob hoc crebram rebellionem meditantes."—WILHELM. MALMESB., i. 2.

[2] "An fuerit monachus non constat."—MABILLON, in *SS. II. Sæc. Prætermissis.* Cf. SURIUS, *De Probatis Sanctorum Vitis*, t. vi. p. 771.

[3] In the existing counties of Dorset or Hants.

[4] "Promittens se illo (Papa) præsente in intimis ultra Anglorum partibus quo nullus doctor præcessisset, sanctæ fidei semina esse sparsurum. . . . . Sed Gewissorum gentem ingrediens, cum omnes ibidem paganissimos inveniret."—BEDE, iii. 7.

Oswald becomes the son-in-law and the godfather of the King of Wessex.

The influence of the pious and zealous Oswald came most fortunately to aid the missionary's arguments; and when King Cynegils consented with all his people to be baptised, his son-in-law became his godfather.[1] The baptism was performed at Dorchester, which was erected into a bishopric for Birinus by the twofold authority of Cynegils, as provincial king, and of Oswald, as Bretwalda or supreme head of the Saxon confederation.[2]

The success of the mission of Birinus was rapid and complete. He founded many churches and converted multitudes. Many years after the close of his long and fruitful pontificate, popular songs intended for choral singing still celebrated the memory of the *Roman exile*,[3] who had come to

[1] "Cum rex ipse catechizatus, fonte baptismi cum sua gente abluere-tur contigit . . . pulcherrimo prorsus et Deo digno consortio, cujus erat filiam accepturus in conjugem, ipsum prius secunda generatione Deo dicatum sibi accepit in filium."—BEDE, iii. 7.

[2] Not the existing county town of Dorsetshire, but a place near Oxford, on the Thames. The episcopal see was, later, transferred to Lincoln. The Saxons of Wessex had two other celebrated bishoprics—Winchester, the cathedral of which Birinus is understood to have founded; and Sherborne, afterwards transferred to Salisbury. The clergy of all these cathedrals were monks.

[3] "*Dignus honore pater* micat aureus ecce BIRINUS;
Sanctus adest omni *dignus honore pater.*
Exul ad hunc populum qui venit ab urbe Quiritum;
Pro Christo pergens, *exul ad hunc populum.* . . .
Hostica barbaries omnis sedatur in illo;
Deque lupo fit ovis *hostica barbaries.* . . .
Liber adest populus, sub longo tempore servus;
Nunc Christo famulans, *liber adest populus.* . . .
Sit benedicta dies in qua maris alta petisti;
Huc quæ te duxit, *sit benedicta dies.*"

This popular song has been published from a MS. of Alençon by M. Edelestand du Méril (*Poésies Inédites du Moyen Age;* Paris, 1854, p.

emancipate the Saxons of the West from bondage to their idols, and blessed the day which had seen him land on their coasts.

The assassin Cuichelm himself was touched, and received baptism on his deathbed, with his son. But the son of Cynegils, Cenwalch, refused to renounce the religion of his ancestors ; and when he succeeded to the throne, it might have been supposed that the work of Oswald and Birinus would be overturned by one of those pagan reactions which had already thrown back into idolatry the subjects of the first Christian king of Kent, as well as the Saxons and Angles of the East. But it does not appear that the new king originated any persecution, or indeed any change whatever ; and, singular to say, it was the ferocious heathen Penda who was the instrument of Divine mercy in bringing the young unbeliever to the truth which he had refused to receive at his father's conversion. The terrible King of Mercia, whose sister Cenwalch had refused, avenged that injury by declaring war against him. The new converts of Wessex were no more able than those of Northumbria or East Anglia to resist the savage energy of the Mercian pagans ; Cenwalch was defeated, dethroned, and exiled. But for him,

277). The learned editor marks the systematic repetition of the first hemistich as a kind of refrain meant for a choir of singers. The same MS. contains poems in which he notes the same kind of rhythm, in honour of two other monastic apostles of the Anglo-Saxons—St Ethelwald and St Swithin.

as for Oswald and Oswy, exile was the cradle of the faith. He sought refuge with the pious King Anna, and in that family of saints[1] he learned to know and to love the faith of Christ. When he was reinstated in his kingdom, he and his people held to their new religion with inviolable fidelity, and during his reign of thirty years he lent active and intelligent assistance in the extension of the Christian faith and of the monastic order. On the death of Birinus, who, notwithstanding his quality of missionary and bishop sent from Rome, has left no trace of his relations with the Roman colony of Canterbury, the Celtic element reappeared among the Saxons of the West, in the person of a Frank, named Agilbert, who had long studied in the Irish monasteries,[2] from which he had newly arrived when he offered himself to King Cenwalch to carry on the work of the deceased bishop. In this he acquitted himself so well that the king, delighted with his learning and activity, induced him to agree to become the bishop of the kingdom. But at the end of ten years, the same king, who understood nothing but Saxon, grew tired of listening to sermons delivered either in Latin or in that Celtic tongue which he considered barbarous. He does not, however, seem to have been animated by any

648.

650.

Cenwalch wishes to have a bishop who can preach in Anglo-Saxon.

[1] "Nam et ipse apud quem exulabat rex erat vir bonus, et bona et sancta sobole felix."—Bede, l. c.

[2] "Venit de Hibernia pontifex quidam, nomine Agilbertus, natione quidem Gallus, sed tunc legendarum gratia Scripturarum in Hibernia non parvo tempore demoratus."—*Ibid.*

systematic hostility against the British Celts, who formed a numerous class amongst his subjects; for while he fulfilled a promise made at his father's deathbed, and founded for his Saxons at Winchester the great monastery which has become one of the most important monuments of English architecture,[1] he at the same time protected and favoured the national sanctuary of the Celts at Glastonbury. A deed of gift exists in which he engages the monks of that British sanctuary to pray for the Saxon king beside the tomb of Arthur. In his reign, it is true, a Saxon for the first time became abbot of the great Celtic monastery;[2] but, on the other hand, it was also under him that the Celt Maïdulphe, a professed monk, and at the same time a distinguished philosopher,[3] came from Ireland or Scotland to lay the humble foundations of an abbey which preserves a trace of his name in the later splendours of Malmesbury.

Nevertheless King Cenwalch wanted a bishop who spoke Saxon,[4] and found him in the person of a certain Vini, who had been ordained in France; and for whom he constituted a new bishopric in connection with his recent monastic establishment of Winchester. Agilbert, however, instead of congratu-

[1] Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum.* t. i. p. 31.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

[3] "Natione Scotus, eruditione philosophus, professione monachus."—Wilh. Malmesb., i. 2.

[4] "Rex qui Saxonum tantum linguam noverat, pertæsus barbaræ loquelæ, subintroduxit in provinciam alium suæ linguæ episcopum."—Bede, l. c.

lating himself, as he ought to have done, on seeing the far too extensive field of his labours diminished, to the great profit of his flock, by the arrival of this fellow-workman native to the soil, was so irritated that he threw up his episcopate and returned to France, where he became Bishop of Paris.

The need of and wish for native bishops increased, however, more and more among the Anglo-Saxons. The first who was invested with the episcopal dignity was Ithamar, a native of Kent, who was summoned to succeed the aged Paulinus in the see of Rochester, where the latter had found an honourable retreat after his flight from Northumbria. It was the Archbishop Honorius of Canterbury, himself a Roman monk, like his four predecessors, who chose Ithamar, acknowledging him to be a man fully capable of rivalling both in knowledge and virtue the Roman bishops who had hitherto occupied the two Kentish bishoprics.[1]

The Anglo-Saxons gradually obtain the episcopal sees.

644.

The small kingdom of Kent, which owed its importance, and perhaps the maintenance of its independence, to the possession of the metropolis of Canterbury, was at this time governed by Ercombert, grandson of the first Christian king, who showed himself even more zealous than his grandsire for the new religion. He enforced the observance of Lent by severe penalties, and gave orders

640-664.

[1] "De gente Cantuariorum, sed vita et eruditione antecessoribus suis æquandum."—BEDE, iii. 14.

for a general destruction of the idols and heathen temples which had been spared for the previous fifty years, notwithstanding the conversion to Christianity of the great majority of the inhabi-
653. tants.[1] It was in his reign that, on the death of the archbishop, the last survivor of Augustin's Italian mission, the rank of metropolitan was, after two years' hesitation and delay, conferred, for the first time, on an Anglo-Saxon. The newly converted realm of Wessex had the honour of furnishing to England her first native Primate. This fifth successor of Augustin was named Frithona, but thought fit to change that Teutonic name for the purely Roman one of *Deus-dedit*. He was consecrated by the English Ithamar, and did not hesitate to remain in friendly relations, or rather to resume intercourse, with the Celtic bishops, who up to this time had scarcely recognised the supremacy of the Church of Canterbury.[2]

Frithona, the West Saxon, is Archbishop of Canterbury. 6th March 655.

III.

CONVERSION OF THE SAXONS OF THE EAST.

Action of Northumbria on the kingdom of Essex.

Whatever may have been the influence of the saintly King Oswald on the conversion of the West Saxons, it was assuredly less direct and less effec-

[1] "Cum avus et pater citra destructionem idolorum fidem nostram coluissent."—Will. Malmesb., *De Gest. Reg. Angl.*, l. i. c. 1.

[2] Hook, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

tual than that of his brother and successor Oswy upon the Saxons of the East and the midland Angles. It must, indeed, be acknowledged that, of all the Northumbrian kings, it is Oswy, stained as he was with the innocent blood of King Oswin, who did most for the extension and defence of Christianity in England.

King Oswy converts his friend King Sigebert. 653.

Sigebert, named *the Good*—king of those West Saxons whom we recently saw driving Mellitus from his bishopric of London, and renouncing the faith which had been urged on them by the preachings of that companion of Augustin, and the influence of the Bretwalda Ethelbert—was Oswy's special friend. Sigebert the Good had dethroned the posterity of those three princes who demanded the communion from the hands of the Christian bishop without having been baptised.[1] He frequently came into Northumbria to visit Oswy as a friend, but doubtless also as the Bretwalda, the sovereign of the confederation, who alone was able to protect the petty kingdom of Essex against its much more powerful neighbours of Wessex and Mercia. Oswy, on those occasions, spoke much to him on the subject of idolatry ; he took pains to make him understand that gods could not be made by the hand of man of stone or wood, the rest of which might be put to the vilest uses ; but that rather far he should believe in a God incomprehensible and in-

[1] See above, vol. iii. p. 415. Compare LAPPENBERG, Genealogical Table B of vol. i.

visible, but all-powerful and eternal, able to govern the world which He has created, and which He will judge, whose throne is in heaven, and not made of worthless metal, and who promises everlasting rewards to such as learn His will and do it on earth. Sigebert suffered himself to be won over by these brotherly and repeated exhortations. After long deliberation with his faithful counsellors, according to the invariable custom of the Saxon kings, and fortified by their unanimous assent, he received baptism, along with his whole court,[1] at the hands of the Celtic bishop Finan, in a royal villa of the Northumbrian kings, called *Ad Murum* (on the wall), from its proximity to the famous rampart built by the Emperor Severus to restrain the incursions of the Caledonians.[2]

A monk of Lindisfarne becomes Bishop of London. 653.

The new Christian was unwilling to return to his kingdom without being accompanied by missionaries commissioned to preach to his people the faith which he had just embraced. For these instructors he applied, naturally, to his friend and brother the king, whom he regarded as the author of his own conversion. Oswy gave him a monk of the great Celtic Monastery of Lindisfarne, named

[1] "Fidem quam olim . . . abjecerant . . . instantia regis Oswin receperunt . . . frequenter solebat eum hortari . . . hæc et hujus modi multa cum rex Oswin regi Sigeberto amicabili et quasi fraterno consilio sæpe inculcaret; tandem juvante amicorum consensu credidit, et facto cum suis consilio cum exhortatione, parentibus cunctis et adherentibus fidei baptizatus est."—BEDE, iii. 22.

[2] *Ad Murum.* This spot is believed to have been at Walton, or rather at Wallbottle, near Newcastle.

Cedd, a Northumbrian by birth, who had already distinguished himself in a mission to the pagans of Mercia.[1] Cedd accordingly went over the whole kingdom of Sigebert, and gathered in a first and ample harvest of souls; after which he returned to Lindisfarne, to be there consecrated Bishop of the West Saxons, whose capital and episcopal see, fomerly occupied by the Roman monk Mellitus, was at London. The monk of Lindisfarne succeeded where the monk of Mount Cœlius had failed. He ordained numerous priests and deacons to assist him in preaching and baptising, and founded many churches and monasteries, in which he endeavoured to induce the best of his converts to adopt the life of the cloister, as far at least as the rudeness of their habits would permit.[2] He himself made continued journeys to Lindisfarne, in his native Northumbria, to renew his spirit, and to draw from the stern penances and bracing traditions of his order the energy he needed to cope with the difficulties of his task.[3]

The end of King Sigebert the Good shows, with

[1] Bede, iii. 21. Compare *Act. SS. Bolland.*, t. i. Jan., p. 373.

[2] "In quibus collecto examine famulorum Christi, disciplinam vitæ regularis, in quantum rudes adhuc capere poterant, custodire docuit."—Bede, iii. 23.

[3] "Solebat . . . sæpius etiam suam, id est Northanhymborum, provinciam exhortandi gratia, revisere."—Bede, iii. 23. It was in one of these journeys that he was detained by the son of King Oswald, who reigned over a part of Deïra, and who had at his court as priest a brother of Cedd. This prince, Ethelwald by name, persuaded Cedd to accept an estate from him, in order to found a monastery, which might serve as the place of his burial—the Monastery of Lastingham, of which we have spoken above, p. 81.

sufficient plainness, the nature of those difficulties, and the combination of firmness and sagacity which was required to overcome them. One of the earls, or principal lords of the country, a near kinsman of the king, having persevered in an illicit connection in spite of the repeated representations of the bishop, Cedd excommunicated him, forbidding any one to enter his house or to eat with him. The king took no notice of this prohibition, and at the invitation of the earl went to dine with him. As he left the house he met the bishop. Both were on horseback, and dismounted to greet each other. The king, affrighted, threw himself at the feet of the bishop, imploring pardon for his fault. The bishop, irritated, touched him with the staff which he carried in his hand, and said to him, "Since you have not chosen to abstain from entering the house of that reprobate, there you shall die."[1] And, in fact, some time after, the same earl and his brother slew the king, whose kinsmen they were. When they were asked the reason of their crime, they assigned no other than the anger they felt at seeing the chief of their race pardon his enemies so readily—granting pardon as soon as it was asked, according to the precept of the Gospel. And certainly, adds honest Bede, we may believe that such a death sufficed, not only to expiate his disobedience

Death of King Sigebert of Essex. 660.

[1] "Episcopus pariter desiluit: sederat enim et ipse in equo. . . . Dico tibi quia noluisti te continere a domo perditi et damnati illius, tu in ipsa domo mori habes."—BEDE, iii. 22.

to the bishop, but also to increase his merits in the sight of God.

Death of Cedd and of his thirty friends. 664.

This zealous prelate, whom we shall meet again farther on, survived his royal convert, whom he had so severely judged, and baptised Sigebert's successor. Afterwards, in one of his too frequent excursions to Northumbria, Cedd was seized with a contagious malady, and died at the Monastery of Lastingham, which he had founded, and of which one of his three brothers, like himself all priests and monks of Lindisfarne, was abbot. When the news of his death reached his diocese, thirty East Saxons, whom he had made monks, started in all haste for the north. They sought the monastery where lay the body of their father and founder, with the intention of living there near his remains, or dying and finding their last repose beside him, if such were the will of God. Their desire was quickly granted. At the end of a few days they all died of the same disease that had cut short the bishop's life.[1] How is it possible but to esteem, in spite of his severity, a bishop capable of inspiring such a rare affection? And how, also, is it possible not to love those rough Saxons, scarce converted, but moved even in the cloister by that passionate self-devotion, by that necessity of giving life for the beloved which, in the midst of their natural fierceness, continued the distinctive feature of the Anglo-Saxon race?

[1] "Cupientes ad corpus sui patris, aut vivere, si sic Deo placeret, aut morientes ibi sepeliri."—BEDE, iii. 23.

Relapse of the East Saxons into idolatry. King Sebbi.

Yet, notwithstanding, these same Saxons, so easily gained and attached by the light and the virtue of the Gospel, often fell back with a lamentable and surprising facility into the depths of Paganism. Bishop Cedd and his thirty friends were scarcely dead, when the people whose apostle and master he had been, apostatised almost in a body. The same disease which had taken from them their bishop, so terrified the East Saxons by its ravages that the king, nobles, and people rivalled each other in their eagerness to restore the temples and altars of offended Woden, hoping thus to ward off the contagion from themselves.

665. Happily another king, named Sebbi, uncle and colleague of the apostate, stood firm, and succeeded in bringing back the whole nation to Christianity, with the aid of the Bishop of the Mercians, a Saxon by birth, but, like so many other pontiffs and missionaries, trained by the Celtic monks of Iona and Lindisfarne.[1] The narratives of Bede, which serve to guide us across the maze of the races and dynasties of the Heptarchy, were taken by him from the lips of a priest who had accompanied this very active and zealous bishop in his unwearied journeys throughout all the corners of the kingdom of Essex, to preach the faith and raise up again the altars of Christ. According to his testimony, the inhabitants were turned back to idolatry less by hostility

[1] "Iarumanus, Anglicus natione, sed a Scotis episcopis ordinatus."—*Anglia Sacra*, t. i. p. 425.

against Christianity than by indifference as to the future life, of which many denied the very existence. But as soon as the churches were reopened, a multitude of Christians reappeared, who loudly declared they would rather die in the faith of the resurrection of our Lord than live under the impure shadow of their idols.[1]

IV.

CONVERSION OF THE MERCIANS, OR MIDLAND ENGLISH.

Influence of the king and bishop of the Northumbrians in the conversion of the Mercians.

The personal influence of King Oswy as a preacher of the Gospel, the royal villa at the foot of the old Roman wall, scene of the baptism of the first converts, and the intervention of the Celtic bishop Finan as administrator of the sacraments—all these details, which impress a special character on the conversion of the Eastern Saxons, are identically reproduced in the history of the conversion of the Mercians. But it will be understood how much more difficult and important this task must have been, when the fierceness of the bloody wars, waged during the thirty years of Penda's reign against Christian Northumbria, is considered, and especially when the vast extent of the kingdom of Mercia,

[1] "Diligentes hanc vitam et futuram non quærentes, sive etiam non esse credentes. . . . Juxta quod mihi presbyter qui comes itineris ille et cooperator verbi extiterat, referebat. . . . Magis cum fide resurrectionis in illo mori, quam in perfidiæ sordibus inter idola vivere cupientes."—BEDE, iii. 30.

almost as large as Northumbria itself, and embracing all the country that lies between the Thames, the Humber, and the Severn, is called to mind. The population of this kingdom was composed of very diverse elements,—first, of great numbers of the conquered Britons; then of Saxon settlers;[1] and, finally, of Angles, especially concentrated on the south-west frontier of Northumbria.[2] Towards the end of his long reign, the ferocious Penda had intrusted the government of the Angles of the Middle to his eldest son Peada. It was through him that Christianity and the Northumbrian influence penetrated into Mercia, and succeeded in beginning operations upon this formidable remnant of darkness, encircled on all sides by newly Christianised states, which still offered a vast and inviolable asylum to Saxon Paganism.

The Mercian Prince Peada asks in marriage the daughter of King Oswy.

As elsewhere, love and marriage had a certain part to play in this revolution. During one of those truces which the sagacious policy of Oswy continued to obtain for ill-starred Northumbria, always bathed in blood or wrapt in flames by the implacable chief of the Mercians, the young Peada, who had all the virtues and all the external advantages which the Saxons prized most highly in their

[1] Among others, the Wuiccas on the west, and the Girwas on the east, who are often mentioned by the historians of the period. They had their own kings, whose charters figure among the very limited number of those whose authenticity is recognised by Kemble.

[2] These Angles bore the name of *Middle Angles*, or English of the Middle, to distinguish them from the East Angles, or Angles of the East.

kings, came into Northumbria to ask the hand of Alchfleda, the daughter of Oswy. Oswy replied that he could not give his daughter to an idolater, and that, in order to win her, Peada and the nation of Angles governed by him must be converted and baptised. The young prince then put himself under instruction, most probably by Bishop Finan; and from the moment when he understood the teachings, and especially the promises, of the Christian faith, the hope of the resurrection, and of that future and everlasting life which the Saxons of the East had been so unwilling to admit, he declared that he would become a Christian, even though the princess whom he sought to wed were refused to him.[1] But Peada seems to have been drawn towards the light of truth even less by his love to Alchfleda than by his friendship for Alchfrid, the brother of the princess. Alchfrid was already his brother-in-law, having married the King of Mercia's daughter, in whom he had found not only a Christian, but a saint,[2] destined to confirm by a new example the providential law, which, amidst the descendants of Odin, selected those who were most marked by the obstinacy and ferocity of their paganism as the progenitors of a race of saints, and especially of

Oswy's son marries Penda's daughter.

Union of the two brothers-in-law.

[1] "Juvenis optimus, ac regis nomine ac persona dignissimus . . . nisi fidem Christi et baptisma cum gente cui præerat, acciperet. At ille, audita prædicatione veritatis, et promissione regni cœlestis, speque resurrectionis ac futuræ immortalitatis, libenter se Christianum fieri velle confessus est, etiamsi virginem non acciperet."—BEDE, iii. 21.

[2] Her name, like that of the wife of the heroic Oswald, was Kyneburge, and, later, she became a nun along with her sister Kyneswitha.

saintly women. It would be desirable to have fuller details of the circumstances which brought these two young princes together, and made them friends and brothers before they became related by marriage. We know only that it was Alchfrid who, of all the preachers of the truth, exercised the strongest influence upon the convictions of his friend. The future King of the Mercians received baptism from Bishop Finan at the villa near the Roman wall, on the same spot, and almost at the same date, as the King of the West Saxons. The earls, the thanes, and the men of war (called at a later period counts, lords, and knights) who had accompanied the young Peada to the Northumbrian court, were baptised along with him, as were also their servants.[1]

Baptism of Peada.

653.

When the Mercian prince, carrying back with him his young wife, returned a Christian from a country which had already been christianised for twenty years, his companions formed a most precious and effectual nucleus for the complete conversion of Mercia. Oswy had added to their party, in the capacity of missionaries, four monks trained at Lindisfarne, and endowed with the knowledge and virtues which seemed to him needful for the evangelising of the new province which was to be won over to Christianity. Three of them were Anglo-Saxons, and among these three was Cedd,

Missionaries from Lindisfarne in Mercia.

[1] "Persuasus maxime ad percipiendam fidem a filio regis Oswin . . . qui erat cognatus et amicus ejus. . . . Baptizatus cum omnibus qui secum venerant comitibus ac militibus corumque famulis universis."—Bede, iii. 21.

whom Oswy almost immediately recalled, to intrust him with the mission to the Eastern Saxons. The fourth, named Diuma, was a Celt by birth, and it was he who became the first bishop of the Mercians. These missionaries obtained a rapid and unhoped-for success. The Middle Angles listened to them with manifest sympathy, and every day the nobles and the common people flocked in great numbers to be baptised.[1]

The behaviour of the savage Penda to his newly converted son and his companions was as singular as it was unexpected. It was to have been looked for that this fierce and unwearied enemy of the Christian kings and nations near him would become the violent persecutor of his own Christian subjects. But it was not so; and, indeed, the history of his frightful ravages in Northumbria and elsewhere records no special indication of enmity against the Christians: no doubt he did not spare them, but there is no proof of his having persecuted them with a peculiar hatred. As to his own kingdom, not only did he take no steps to punish his eldest son and the other converts, but he allowed the Northumbrian missionaries freely to preach the Gospel to all who wished to hear them in those districts, the exclusive sovereignty of which he had reserved to himself.

Penda's toleration of his Christian subjects.

[1] "Qui ad docendam baptizandamque gentem illius, et eruditione et vita videbantur idonei . . . prædicabant verbum et libenter auditi sunt, multique quotidie nobilium et infimorum, abrenuntiatâ sorde idolatriæ, fidei sunt fonte abluti."—Bede, iii. 21.

This barbarian ravager and pagan gave thus an example of toleration by which many Christians in ages more enlightened than his might be profited. He confined himself to evincing haughtily his dislike and contempt for those who, after having received the faith of Christ, did not practise its works. "Those who despise," said he, "the laws of the God in whom they believe, must be despised as wretches."[1]

Penda, however, continued none the less the pitiless foe of the princes and people of Northumbria. This bloodthirsty and stubborn hatred led him to his destruction.

Last struggle between Oswy and Penda.

It was only at the last extremity that Oswy resolved to engage in a final conflict with the terrible enemy who had conquered and slain his two predecessors, Edwin and Oswald. It has been seen that he married his son and his daughter to children of Penda; and he gave him another of his sons as a hostage. But Penda would not consent to any durable peace. During the thirteen years that had elapsed since the overthrow of Oswald and the accession of Oswy, he had periodically subjected Northumbria to frightful devastations. In vain Oswy, driven to desper-

[1] "Nec prohibuit Penda rex quin etiam in sua, hoc est, Merciorum natione, verbum, si qui vellent audire, prædicaretur. Quin potius odio habebat et despiciebat eos quos fide Christi imbutos, opera fidei non habere deprehendit, dicens contemnendos esse eos et miseros qui Deo suo quem crederent obedire contemnerent."—BEDE, iii. 21.

ation, offered him all the jewels, ornaments, and treasures of which he could dispose, as a ransom for his desolated and hopeless provinces. The arrogant and fierce octogenarian refused everything, being resolute, as he said, to exterminate the whole Northumbrian race, from first to last. "Well, then," said Oswy, "since this heathen contemns our gifts, let us offer them to one who will accept them—to the Lord our God."[1] He then made a vow to devote to God a daughter who had just been born to him, and at the same time to give twelve estates for the foundation of as many monasteries. After this he marched at the head of a small army against Penda, whose troops were, according to Northumbrian tradition, thirty times more numerous. Besides his Mercians, Penda led to battle a crowd of auxiliaries under the command of thirty chiefs who bore the title of king; first of all, the implacable Britons, his constant allies against the Angles of the North; then a body of East Anglians; and finally, by an inexcusable treason against his country and his uncle, the nephew of Oswy, the son of his brother, who had been killed by Penda, the same Ethelwald who reigned over a portion of Deïra.

[1] "Cum acerbas atque intolerabiles pateretur irruptiones . . . dummodo ille provincias usque ad internecionem vastare desineret . . . qui totam ejus gentem a parvo usque ad majorem delere atque exterminare decreverat. . . . Si paganus nescit accipere nostra donaria, offeramus ei qui novit, Domino nostro Deo."—BEDE, iii. 24.

Battle of Windwaëd. 15th Nov. 655.

Notwithstanding the enormous disparity of the forces, the battle, which was fought on the banks of a river near the site of the present town of Leeds, was lost by Penda. The traitor Ethelwald sought safety in flight as soon as the struggle commenced, but the other allies, Britons and East Anglians, were exterminated. The vanquished in their flight found the river in flood, so that a larger number perished in the waters than by the sword. Penda was slain fighting valiantly in the *mêlée*. Thus perished at the age of eighty years, after a reign of thirty, the conqueror and murderer of five Anglo-Saxon kings,[1] the last and indefatigable champion of paganism among the Anglo-Saxons, the ally and too effective instrument of the vengeance of the old British Christians against their converted invaders.[2]

Death of Penda, the last champion of paganism.

Final triumph of Northumbria and of the Christian cause.

This battle decided the fate of England: it not only insured the emancipation and temporary preponderance of Northumbria; but it put a period to the struggle which for 200 years the British had maintained against the Anglo-Saxons. Henceforth there might be partial resistance and local conflicts, but there was no general attempt, with any chance of success, to repel the

[1] Two kings of Northumbria, Edwin and Oswald; and three of East Anglia, Sigebert, Egeric, and Anna.

[2] "Fertur quia tricies majorem pagani habuerint exercitum . . . triginta legiones ducibus nobilissimis instructas . . . duces regii triginta qui ad auxilium venerant pene omnes interfecti."—BEDE. Compare LA BORDERIE, *op. cit.*, p. 223-25. The battle-field is now called Winn Moor, and the river the Broad Are.

progress of invasion. All the little British kingdoms which occupied the existing counties of Chester, Lancashire, and Westmoreland, on the coast of the Irish Channel, were finally swept away and taken possession of by the Saxons of Northumbria.[1]

Farther, it sealed the political and military triumph of the new religion, in the very bosom of the Heptarchy, over that external and official paganism which was the religious tradition of the nation. But this triumph was far from being sufficient for the designs of God, and for the deliverance of the souls of men. There was an inner paganism, infinitely more difficult to overcome—the paganism of the savage morals and uncurbed passions of a conquering race. The valiant sword of the Northumbrians might well gain the mastery over oppressors and ravagers ; but the word, and above all, the virtue, of the monks was needed to propagate and consolidate the faith, and root it deeply in the heart and life of the victors.

How Oswy, when victorious, fulfilled his vow.

Oswy faithfully kept his word to God and to the Christian people. He set apart the twelve estates to be thenceforth monastic property—six in the north and six in the south of his double kingdom

[1] La Borderie, *op. cit.*, p. 227. Cumbria alone remained to them : the country of the Kymri or Cumbrians, now Cumberland, formed a small kingdom which recovered its independence after the death of Oswy's sons, and maintained it till the tenth century, like the other small British kingdom of Strathclyde, between the Solway and the wall of Severus.

—to form an endowment for monks who should substitute for the warlike service by which these domains were usually held an unceasing prayer for eternal peace.[1] He then took his daughter Elfleda, who was but yet a year old, and consecrated her to God by the vow of perpetual virginity. Her mother, the daughter of Edwin, first Christian King of Northumbria, had been thus dedicated to God from her birth, but only by baptism, and as a token of the gratitude of a still pagan father for the protection of the Christians' God. The daughter of Oswy was to be the price of a yet greater gift of heaven—the conclusive victory of his race, and of the Christian faith in his country: the sacrifice thus imposed on her reminds us of that of Jephthah's daughter. It will be seen that, far from desiring to escape her vow, she showed herself, during a long life, always worthy of her heavenly bridegroom. The king took her from the caresses of her mother, to intrust her, not, as we might have supposed, to his sister the Abbess Ebba of Coldingham, but to Hilda, a princess of the rival dynasty, who nearly ten years before had been initiated into monastic life by Bishop Aïdan.

His daughter Elfleda a nun in her cradle.

After the overthrow of Penda, Oswy, now master of Mercia, in right of his victory, undertook with his accustomed zeal to effect the conversion of that

Oswy achieves the conversion of Mercia.

[1] "In quibus, ablato studio militiæ terrestris ad exercendam militiam cœlestem, supplicandumque pro pace ejus æterna, devotioni sedulæ monachorum locus facultasque suppediteret."—Bede, iii. 24.

kingdom. He left a portion of it to his son-in-law Peada, the son of his terrible opponent, whose ardour in the Christian cause seconded all his efforts for the extension of the true faith. The monk Diuma, born in Ireland, and one of the four missionaries whom Peada had brought from Northumbria at the time of his marriage, was consecrated by the Bishop of Lindisfarne, and appointed Bishop of all Mercia, including therein the nation of the Middle Angles already converted under Peada. It was necessary that two distinct races should thus be united in one diocese, because of the small number of priests who were worthy of promotion to the episcopate.[1] The pontificate of Diuma was short, but fruitful. At his death he was succeeded by another Irishman, Ceolach, who was reckoned among the disciples of Columba, the great Celtic missionary, as coming from the Monastery of Iona,[2] to which he returned after some years of a too laborious episcopate in Mercia, to seek the peace of cloistered life in that citadel of Celtic monachism. The third Bishop[3] of Mercia, Trumhere, an abbot in Northumbria, and an Anglo-Saxon by birth, came, like his brethren, from the Celtic cloisters, and was, like them, consecrated by the Bishop of

The first five bishops of Mercia are Celtic monks.

[1] "Paucitas enim sacerdotum cogebat unum antistitem duobus populis præfici."—BEDE, iii. 21. It should be observed that these two races were long before united under the same kings.

[2] COLGAN, *Trias Thaumaturga*, p. 488.

[3] Trumhere had been abbot of the Monastery of Gilling, founded by Queen Eanfleda, on the spot of her cousin King Oswyn's murder. See above, p. 49.

Lindisfarne.[1] His two successors, Jaruman and Ceadda, had the same origin ; the one was born in Ireland, and the other, a Saxon by birth, had been ordained by the Scots.[2]

It is thus evident that the extension of Christianity and the government of the Church among the Saxons of Mercia were entirely under the influence of Scotch or Anglo-Celtic monks, disciples
659. and spiritual descendants of St Columba. This state of matters was not at all altered when the Mercians, rising under three of their principal chiefs, shook off the yoke of Oswy, and took as their king a youthful son of Penda, whom these three earls had kept in concealment since the overthrow of his father. They drove out the officials of the Northumbrian king, but they kept, with the bishop, the faith which had come to them from Northumbria, and which was to them now no less dear than their freedom and their reconquered frontiers. They desired, they said, to be free, with a king of their own race, on earth, without ceasing to serve Christ, the true and eternal King, so as to gain His kingdom of heaven.[3]

[1] "Diuma, natione Scotus. . . . Ceollach et ipse de natione Scotorum . . . reversus est ad insulam Hii, ubi plurimorum caput et arcem Scoti habuere cœnobium. . . . Trumheri, de natione quidem Anglorum, sed edoctus et ordinatus a Scotis."—BEDE, iii. 21, 24.

[2] "Anglicus, sed a Scotis ordinatus."—*Anglia Sacra*, vol. i. Cf. EDDIUS, *Vita S. Wilfrid.*

[3] "Ejectis principibus regis non proprii, fines suos fortiter simul et libertatem receperunt. Sicque cum suo rege liberi, Christo vero rege pro sempiterno in cœlis regno, servire gaudebant."—BEDE, iii. 24.

Twenty years later, this stubborn repugnance of the Mercians to the yoke of their Northumbrian neighbours manifested itself with painful distinctness among the monks of one of the principal monasteries of the country. It was at Bardeney, in that province of Lindsay (Lincolnshire), the conquest of which had already cost good King Oswald his life. His niece, the daughter of Oswy, had become queen of Mercia. It was her desire that this monastery, which was especially dear to her as well as to her husband, should receive the remains of her uncle. The bones of the sainted king arrived one evening, borne in a chariot, at the gate of the monastery, but the monks refused to receive them. "We know well," said they, "that he is holy; but he is not of our country, and in other days he subdued us by force."[1] It was necessary to yield to this explosion of patriotic rancour, and the sacred body had to remain all night in the open air. The next morning the monks were told that a luminous column had descended from heaven on the car which bore the corpse of the Northumbrian king, and had been seen by all the country round about. Upon this they thought better of it, and

The Mercian monks of Bardeney refuse to receive the body of the holy Northumbrian king Oswald.

675.

[1] "Quia etsi sanctum cum noverant, tamen quia de alia provincia ortus fuerat et super eos regnum acceperat, veteranis eum odiis etiam mortuum insequebatur."—BEDE, iii. 11. It is plain that this passage does not favour the interpretation of Father Faber, who sees in the conduct of the monks of Bardeney a repugnance to the Celtic rite and the Scots saints. *Life of St Oswald*, p. 68.

opened the door of their church to the uncle of their protectress.

His relics thenceforth remained there revered by all. A banner of purple and gold placed over his shrine betokened his twofold dignity as saint and king. But it is not the less necessary to note this first and instinctive outburst of a local and provincial patriotism, sometimes even more powerful than the popular devotion, a new explosion of which long after brought about the murder of the pious queen who had striven so anxiously to endow Mercia with the relics of the great Northumbrian saint.[1] For the history of these times and races never allows us to forget that barbarism was always ready to reclaim its ancient rights even amidst the blossoming of Christian virtues and monastic austerities.

The entire narrative is very confused, very obscure, in great measure unknown, and much forgotten. But across these darkling foundations of the primitive history of Christian races stirs everywhere a potent and heroic breath, the breath of life, of the true and noble life—that breath which has made out of the confused masses of barbarism

[1] "Ut regia viri sancti persona memoriam haberet æternam, vexillum ejus super tumbam auro et purpura compositum adposuerunt."—BEDE, l. c. This daughter of Oswy was named Osthryda. She frequently lived at Bardeney, where she received the visits of the neighbouring abbesses, whom she was able to interest in the veneration of her uncle. She was assassinated by the nobles of Mercia in 697. It will be seen farther on, that her husband King Ethelred afterwards became a monk.

those modern Christian nations, free and manly, among whom the place held by England is known to all.

V.

Summary of the successive conversion of the kingdoms of the Heptarchy. 597-655.

In summing up the history of the efforts made during the sixty years between the landing of Augustin and the death of Penda to introduce Christianity into England, the results may be stated thus: Of the eight kingdoms of the Anglo-Saxon Confederation, that of Kent alone was exclusively won and retained by the Roman monks, whose first attempts among the East Saxons and Northumbrians ended in failure. In Wessex and in East Anglia the Saxons of the West and the Angles of the East were converted by the combined action of Continental missionaries and Celtic monks. As to the two Northumbrian kingdoms, and those of Essex and Mercia, which comprehended in themselves more than two-thirds of the territory occupied by the German conquerors, these four countries owed their final conversion exclusively to the peaceful invasion of the Celtic monks, who not only rivalled the zeal of the Roman monks, but who, the first obstacles once surmounted, showed much more perseverance and gained much more success.

All the kingdoms of the Heptarchy have thus passed under our review except that of Sussex, or the Saxons of the South. It was the smallest of all,

but one of the earliest founded;[1] and the first German invaders of the southern coast of Great Britain were notorious among all the others for their ferocity and their invincible vigour. Although they were next neighbours to the kingdom of Kent, the Roman missionaries, Augustin's companions, have left no trace of their presence among them, if indeed they ever tried to penetrate there. The Celtic monks, more enterprising or more persevering, made their way thither to form a first station, an advanced post, as it were, of their future army. They founded the very small Monastery of Bosham, protected on one side by the sea, on the other by forests, and here vegetated five or six monks who came from East Anglia, the nearest Northumbrian province, under the leadership of an Irishman, the compatriot and disciple of that Fursy whose strange visions were everywhere narrated. There they served God as they best could, humbly and poorly; but not one of the Saxons of the country would listen to their preaching, still less adopt their manner of life.[2] This is the only example known to us of a complete failure. And yet the people of Sussex, although the last of all the Saxons to receive the Gospel, owe, as we shall see,

[1] By Ælla in 477.

[2] "Monachus quidam de natione Scotorum, vocabulo Dicul, habens monasteriolum permodicum. . . . In humili et paupere vita Domino famulantes. Sed provincialium nullus eorum vel vitam æmulari vel prædicationem curabat audire."—Bede, iv. 13. Compare iii. 19.

that blessing to a monk trained in the school of the Celtic missionaries. This monk, however, by forsaking the rule of his first masters, in order to connect himself more closely with Roman tradition and authority, produced in the new Church of England a revolution which it now remains for us to record.

BOOK XII.

ST WILFRID ESTABLISHES ROMAN UNITY AND THE BENEDICTINE ORDER, 634-709.

"Sanctus haberi
Justitiæque tenax, factis dictisque mereris?
Agnosco procerem."—JUVENAL.

CHAPTER I.

BEGINNING OF WILFRID'S CAREER—ASSEMBLY OF WHITBY.

Birth and early years of Wilfrid.—Note on his biographer Eddi.—Protected by the Queen of Northumbria, he enters at Lindisfarne, then goes to Rome, where no Anglo-Saxon had yet been.—He passes by Canterbury and stops at Lyons, where he separates from his companion Benedict Biscop, and where the archbishop wishes to give him his niece in marriage.—Wilfrid at Rome.—In returning by Lyons he receives the Romish tonsure and escapes, against his will, from martyrdom.—Returned to England, he becomes the intimate friend of Alchfrid, son of King Oswy.—New monastery founded at Ripon, from whence the monks of the Celtic ritual are expelled.—Popularity of Wilfrid.—He is ordained priest by a French bishop.—Southern Ireland had already adopted the Romish computation for the celebration of Easter.—The dispute on this question revived by Wilfrid in Northumbria, and division of the royal family.—The King Oswy follows the Celtic ritual; his wife and son that of Rome.—Importance and nature of the Pascal difference.—Moderation of the Romish Church throughout the dispute.—A rivalry of influence mingles with the ritualistic dispute.—Assembly of Whitby, convoked by the king to end the controversy: composition of the assembly: the two chambers: principal persons; on the side of the Celts, the Abbess Hilda and her two communities, the Bishops of Lindisfarne and London; on the side of Rome, the young King Alchfrid, the old deacon James, and Wilfrid.—The authority of Columba unwisely invoked.—The king pronounces for the Romish Easter, and the assembly ratifies his decision.—Bishop Colman protests, abdicates, and returns to Iona, carrying with him the bones of his predecessor St Aïdan, the Celtic apostle of Northumbria.

WHILE the bishops and monks of Celtic origin were gradually establishing their authority, to-

gether with that of the Christian faith, in the greater part of the land of the Heptarchy, protected by the ægis of the Northumbrian kings, and without any ostensible relation either with Rome or with the Roman colony and its official metropolis of Canterbury, a young Anglo-Saxon, destined to transform the Church of England, was growing up unknown. More powerful than the missionaries sent from Rome, it was to be given to him, after many a struggle and many a defeat, to extend the authority of the Holy See over all Anglo-Saxon Christianity, to re-establish, even to his own prejudice, the supremacy of the metropolitan see instituted by Gregory, and to substitute everywhere the rule of St Benedict for the observances and ascendancy of the sons of St Columba.[1]

[1] The life of Wilfrid was written by one of his companions, the monk Eddi, surnamed Stephen, whose work is regarded as the most ancient monument of Anglo-Saxon literature after those of St Adhelm. Venerable Bede did not write till later. He was evidently acquainted with the text of Eddi, which he has sometimes reproduced, but without quoting him, while extenuating to the utmost all the wrongs attributed to the bishops and kings with whom Wilfrid had to contend. This life, so curious and so important for the ecclesiastical history of the seventh century, had remained unknown to Mabillon and the Bollandists when they published, the former his volume of the Acta of this century in 1672, and the latter their third volume of April in 1675. Some time afterwards Mabillon was informed that the MS. of Eddi was found in the Cottonian Library at Oxford. It was communicated to him by Gale, a learned Englishman, and he published it in the supplement to his fifth volume. Gale republished it soon after in his collection of the *Scriptores Historiæ Britanniæ XV.* (Oxonii, 1691), with the new chapters discovered in a manuscript at Salisbury. They were reprinted by Mabillon in the last volume of his *Acta Sanctorum Ordinis S. Benedicti*, with a warm and touching homage to his English correspondents: "Sic integrum exhibemus opus tamdiu desideratum omnibus litteratis, qui humanissimis et clarissimis viris Bernardo et Gaelo gratias mecum habebunt immortales." After this con-

This young man was named Wilfrid, and belonged by birth to the highest nobility of Northumbria. He was born in 634, the day after the death of King Edwin, the flight of Bishop Paulinus, and the apparently irreparable downfall of the Romish mission in the north of England. Birth and early years of Wilfrid. 634.

Of him, as of all the greater saints, and especially of St Columba and St Bernard, it is related that his birth was accompanied by a prophecy of his future glory. The house where his mother lay appeared all at once enveloped in a flame which seemed to reach to heaven. The frightened neighbours rushed to extinguish the fire, when they were met by the attendants of the new mother, who said to them, "Be at ease, it is not a fire, but only this child who is just born." Such a prodigy naturally drew attention to the infant, and all the more because his father was one of the principal nobles of the country, and the boy himself, as he grew up, displayed a singularly gracious nature. While he was still in the cradle, he lost his pious mother, and his father having married a second time, he resolved at thirteen years of age to escape the persecutions of a harsh and haughty stepmother by leaving

temporary author, and Bede, who follows him so closely, the life of Wilfrid was written in Latin verse by an English Benedictine of the ninth century named Fridegod, whose poem, though ridiculous in style, contains some new details; then in the twelfth century by the celebrated Eadmer and by William of Malmesbury. Cf. *Act. SS. O. B.*, vol. iii. p. 150, and vol. v. p. 632. The collection called *Lives of the English Saints*, published by the Puseyites in 1844, contains a *Life of St Wilfrid* by the Rev. Mr Faber, who died an Oratorian in 1864.

home and devoting himself to God. For this the consent, not only of his father, but also of King Oswy as chief of the nation, was necessary. At his age a young Anglo-Saxon noble was already treated as a man; he asked and obtained accordingly from his father a suit of armour, with horses and servants in sufficient number to enable him to appear at court in a manner worthy of his rank. Thus equipped he went to seek, not King Oswy, but his queen. He found her surrounded by the leaders of the nobility whom he was accustomed to see and to wait upon at his father's house, and who were already disposed in his favour on account of his intelligence and modesty. They presented him to the young queen, who was only seven or eight years older than himself, and whose heart he gained as much by his youthful grace as by the refinement and truthfulness of his intellect.[1]

He is protected by Queen Eanfleda. 648.

The queen herself was no other than that Eanfleda whose baptism, it may be remembered, had given the signal for the conversion of Northumbria,[2] and who had been the first Christian of the

[1] "De inclyta gentis Anglorum prosapia . . . nobilitate natus."—EADMER, *Vita*, n° 4. "De utero matris suæ valde religiosæ. . . . Omnes concito cursu pavidi advenerunt. . . . Sustinete . . . ecce modo infans hic natus est. . . . Omnibus in domum patris sui venientibus aut regalibus sociis aut eorum servis edocte ministravit. . . . Privigna (*noverca*, FRIDEGODUS) enim molesta et immitis. . . . Pergens itinere usquedum invenirent reginam regis . . . et per nobiles viros quibus ante in domo patris sui ministrabat laudatus præsentatusque est reginæ . . . erat decorus adspectu et acutissimi ingenii."—EDDIUS, c. 1, 2. "Ut merito a majoribus quasi unus ex ipsis amaretur, veneraretur, amplecteretur."—BEDE, v. 19.

[2] See vol. iii. p. 437.

kingdom. Her father was the martyr King Edwin, and her mother Ethelburga, daughter of the royal convert of Augustin, who still lived in the monastery of Lymington, where she had passed her widowhood in retirement. Eanfleda herself was destined to end her days in the cloister under the crosier of that daughter whom she dedicated to God in order to obtain the defeat of the tyrant Penda. The antecedents and the character of the Queen of Northumbria naturally influenced her in favour of the young noble's desire. She granted him, or prevailed with her husband to grant him, authority to renounce all public and military service in order to enter upon a religious life, in which she promised to watch over him. She then confided him to the care of a favourite follower of the king, who himself afterwards retired from the world. This aged warrior conducted his young and noble charge to the great monastic sanctuary of Northumbria at Lindisfarne. There Wilfrid won all hearts as he had won the queen's. His humility and ardour for monastic rule, no less than his passion for study, marked him out for the affectionate admiration of the cenobites. He soon learned the whole Psalter in the version of St Jerome, and made the contents of all the other books which he found in the library of the monastery, his own.[1]

He obtains from the king permission to become a monk at Lindisfarne. 648.

Thus the years of his youth flowed on at Lin-

[1] "Concedit in quod petierit, ut sub suo consilio et munimine serviret. . . . Quidam nobilis ex sodalibus regis valde sibi amabilis et fidelis,

disfarne; but before he yielded the half of his long hair to the scissors, which, cutting bare the upper part and front of his head, would have impressed on him the monastic tonsure according to the Irish fashion, he began to find out that all was not perfect in those Celtic rules and traditions of which Lindisfarne was the centre and stronghold in England. With a sagacity much admired by his historians, he determined to make a journey which no other Anglo-Saxon had yet undertaken, and to go to Rome, not merely to obtain the remission of his sins and the blessing of the Mother of the Churches, but also to study the monastic and ecclesiastical observances which were followed under the shadow of the See of St Peter. The monks of Lindisfarne being informed by their pupil of this extraordinary project, not only used no attempts at dissuasion, but actually encouraged him to accomplish it;[1] nothing could better prove their good faith and implicit subordination to Catholic unity. Wilfrid then went to ask his father's blessing, and to confide his plans to his royal protectress. Queen

He undertakes a journey to Rome, where no Anglo-Saxon had yet been.

Cudda. . . . Omnibus statim in amore factus est. . . . Omnem psalmorum seriem memorialiter et aliquantos libros didicit."—EDDIUS, c. 2.

[1] "Adhuc laicus capite. . . . Adhuc inattritam vitam genti nostræ tentare in cor adolescentis ascendit."—EDDIUS, c. 23. "Necdum quidem adtonsus, verum eis quæ tonsura majores sunt virtutibus, humilitatis et obedientiæ non mediocriter insignitus. . . . Animadvertit paulatim adolescens animi sagacis, minime perfectam esse virtutis viam quæ tradebatur a Scottis proposuitque animo venire Romam, et qui ad sedem apostolicam ritus ecclesiastici sive monasteriales servarentur, videre. . . . Laudaverunt ejus propositum eumque id . . . perficere suadebant."—BEDE, l. c.

Eanfleda, who, after the murder of her father, had taken refuge in the country of her mother at Canterbury, was too much the spiritual daughter of the Romish missionaries not to approve of Wilfrid's design. She sent him with warm recommendations to her cousin-german Ercombert, King of Kent,[1] praying that prince to keep the young pilgrim with him until he should be able to find suitable companions for so long a journey.

652. On his arrival at Canterbury Wilfrid exercised the same fascination upon the King of Kent as upon all those who had known him from his childhood. Seeing the young and handsome Northumbrian wholly given up to prayer and study, Ercombert conceived for him the most ardent attachment, and kept him at his court for a whole year. Wilfrid took advantage of this interval to study and adopt the Romish usages as they could be learned in the Roman colony at Canterbury, which was still governed by a missionary brought over by St Augustin, Archbishop Honorius, now his fourth successor. He took the trouble to substitute, in his happy and flexible memory, the fifth edition of the

Passes through Canterbury. 627-633.

[1] Ethelbert, first Christian king, died in 613, married Bertha, granddaughter of St Clotilde.

Eadbald reigned from 616 to 640.	Ethelburga, wife of Edwin, King of Northumbria.
Ercombert reigned from 640 to 664.	Eanfleda, born 626, wife of Oswy, King of Northumbria.

old version of the Psalter, which was then used in Rome, for the version corrected by St Jerome, which he had learned by heart at Lindisfarne, and which was used in the Celtic Church as well as in the Churches of Gaul and Germany.[1] Meantime the Queen of Northumbria, impatient for the return of her favourite, urged upon King Ercombert that Wilfrid should commence his pilgrimage, and soon afterwards the monarch gave him leave to depart, sending with him another young Northumbrian noble, Biscop Baduging, equally distinguished by his zeal for study, equally inflamed with the desire of visiting Rome, and whom, under the name of Benedict Biscop, we shall afterwards see filling an important part in the monastic history of his own province.

Thus they started; and it is easy to imagine the joy and ardour of these young and brave Christians, when, after having rapidly crossed the Straits, they began their journey through France.
634. Wilfrid especially, with all the enthusiasm of his age, pursued his way, strong and unwearied, with an affability and gaiety which nothing could alter. His companion, a little older, was of a more austere

[1] "Rex vero . . . servum Dei . . . mirifice diligebat . . . Psalmos quos prius secundum Hieronymum legerat, more Romanorum juxta quintam editionem memorialiter transmutavit. . . . Secundum petitionem reginæ languentis tædio. . . . Perrexit cum benedictione parentum suorum. . . . Omnibus affabilis . . . corpore strenuus . . . pedibus velox . . . tristia ora nunquam contraxit . . . alacer et gaudens navigio."—EDDIUS, c. 3. "Supervenit illo alius adolescens de nobilibus Anglorum."—BEDE, l. c.

temper; thus it was impossible that they should long agree.[1] On their arrival at Lyons, Biscop proceeded immediately to Rome, while Wilfrid remained some months with the Archbishop Delphinus. Here also was displayed the marvellous empire which this youth obtained over the hearts of the most different persons, from the young queen of his own country and the warlike comrades of his father, to this Gallo-French prelate, who was so charmed with him, with the pure and candid soul which was well reflected in the serene beauty of his countenance, that he offered to adopt him as his son, giving him his niece in marriage, and the government of the whole of an adjoining province. But Wilfrid replied, "I have made a vow; I have left, like Abraham, my kindred and my father's house in order to visit the Apostolic See, and to study there the rules of ecclesiastical discipline, that my nation may profit by them. But if God gives me life I will return this way and see you again."

At Lyons, he parts from his companion, St Benedict Biscop.

The archbishop, recognising the earnest sincerity of his vocation, let him depart for Rome with all his suite; for the young and high-born Northumbrian did not travel as a simple pilgrim, but with all kinds of guides and baggage.[2]

[1] "Decedente ab eo austeræ mentis duce."—EDDIUS, c. 3.

[2] "Videns in facie serena quod benedictam mentem gerebat. . . . Si manseris mecum fiducialiter, dabo tibi vicinam partem Galliarum ad regendum virginemque filiam fratris mei in uxorem, et te ipsum adoptivum filium habebo. . . . Sunt vota mea Domino . . . ut visitem sedem apos-

Wilfrid at Rome. 634.

On entering Rome, his first thought was to hurry to the Church of St Andrew, from whence Augustin and the first missionaries to England had set out. Kneeling before the altar, where there was a copy of the Gospels, he implored the Apostle St Andrew, for the love of that God whom he had confessed by his martyrdom, to open his mind, and to atone for the rustic plainness of his Saxon tongue by giving him grace to study, to understand, and to teach the English nation the eloquence of the Gospel. After which, as he began to visit, one by one, all the sanctuaries of the Eternal City, he met with a wise and holy man, Archdeacon Boniface, one of the principal counsellors of the Pope, who took pleasure in instructing the young stranger as his own child, carefully explaining to him the four Gospels, the ecclesiastical discipline, and the calculation of Easter, which the Celts of Britain and Ireland refused to admit. Finally, he presented him to the Pope, to whom he explained the object of the journey of this youthful servant of God: the Pontiff placed his hand upon the head of the young Englishman, blessed, and prayed for him. Thus Wilfrid left

tolicam et ecclesiasticæ disciplinæ regulas didicerim in augmentum regis nostræ. . . . Cum ducibus et opibus."—EDDIUS, c. 4. "Cunctis simul quæ necessitas poscebat itineris largiter subministratis."—BEDE, l. c. This Archbishop Delfin or Delphinus is one of the most disputed personages in the history of the seventh century; see the article consecrated to him by the Bollandists in vol. vii. of September, p. 720 to 744. It is he who is venerated in the diocese of Lyons under the name of St Annemond or St Chamond.

Rome, assuredly without suspecting the harsh and cruel trials which were fated to bring him back thither so often again.[1]

Wilfrid receives the Romish tonsure at Lyons.

In returning from Rome, Wilfrid, as he had promised, again stopped at Lyons to see the archbishop, who received him with all his former tenderness, still insisting upon making him his heir. He even remained three whole years with this prelate, occupied in completing his ecclesiastical education among the learned doctors whom he found at Lyons, as if his desire had been to arm himself completely against Celtic usages, by comparing the teaching received at Rome with the venerable traditions of the earliest Gallican Church. Here, too, he received from the hands of the archbishop the tonsure which he preferred, no longer that Celtic tonsure which shaved the top and front of the head, from one ear to the other, leaving the hair to hang down behind, which the Romans, it is not known why, called the tonsure of Simon the Magician; nor the Oriental tonsure, which completely bared the head, and which was believed to be that of St Paul; but the Roman tonsure, that of St Peter, which removed all the

[1] "De remissione peccatorum suorum, pro qua instantius orabat, per hoc certificari postulabat, si de ingenii sui tarditate et linguæ suæ rusticitate, ipsius interventu, absolvi mereretur."—RICARDI HAGULSTADENSIS, *Hist.*, c. 3. "Ut pro sua intercessione Dominus ei legendi ingenium et docendi in gentibus eloquentiam Evangeliorum concedisset. . . . Qui ponens manum benedictam super caput adolescentuli servi Dei, cum oratione benedixit eum."—EDDIUS, c. 5. The Pope was probably Eugenius I., elected in 654, during the exile of the holy martyr Pope Martin I.

hair except a circle round the skull, representing the form of the crown of thorns.

The extreme importance attached to this difference of tonsure, puerile and insignificant as it is in our eyes, will no longer astonish us when we remember the great significance of long hair among all barbarous races, and above all among our Merovingians. Long hair in men was not only the mark of royal or very noble birth, but also a sign of power, daring, and pride. Apart even from the question of ritual unity, Wilfrid and the Romans, without doubt, saw in the persistence of the Celts in wearing long hair, at least at the back of their heads, a vestige of pride and want of discipline incompatible with the ecclesiastical profession, and especially with the life of the cloister.

Wilfrid's visit to Delphinus was cut short by the death of the archbishop, who perished a victim to the tyranny of Ebroïn, then governor of Neustria and Burgundy in the name of the Regent Bathilda, the French queen, once an English slave, who was afterwards to become a nun and a saint. Delphinus was seized in his metropolitan city by the soldiers of Ebroïn, who dragged him to Chalons, and there put him to death. Wilfrid followed him, in spite of the entreaties of the martyr; with the incomparable enthusiasm and heroism of youth, he hoped to partake the fate of his protector. "What could be better," he said, "than to die together, father and son, and to be

with Christ?" After the murder of the archbishop, when Wilfrid, stripped of his vestments, waited his turn, the chiefs of the party asked who this handsome youth, so eager for death, might be? and when they were told that he was a foreigner, of the race of those famous conquerors of Great Britain who were feared all over the world, they resolved to spare him. After this, as soon as he had superintended the burial of his spiritual father, he returned to England.[1]

Despite himself he escapes martyrdom.

These details may perhaps appear too minute; but they will be pardoned on account of the interest which attaches to the early years of a man destined to exercise, throughout half a century, a preponderating influence over his country, and, through her, over the power and freedom of the whole Church. Nor is it a matter without interest to seize in their very birth the manifestations of that mysterious and disinterested attraction which drew towards Rome, and towards Roman ideas and practices, this noble and daring scion of a barbarous race, this champion whose impassioned constancy contributed so powerfully in the future to link the destinies of England, and, by her means, of Germany and the whole west, to the foot of the apostolic throne.

[1] "Amor magis ac magis crescebat inter eos. . . . A doctoribus valde eruditis multa didicit. . . . Tonsuræ de ore apostoli formulam, in modum coronæ spineæ caput Christi cingentis . . . libenter suscepit. . . . Nihil est melius quam pater et filius simul mori et esse cum Christo. . . . Quis est iste juvenis formosus qui se præparat ad mortem? . . . Transmarinus de Anglorum gente ex Britannia. . . . Parcite illi et nolite tangere eum."—EDDIUS, c. 6. "Quod tunc temporis magno terrori quamplurimis erat, sua scilicet Anglorum natio."—EADMER, n. 11.

Wilfrid, after his return to England, becomes the intimate friend of the son of Oswy.

On his return to England, Wilfrid, from the first, by the crown-like form of his tonsure, set up a visible and permanent protest against the ascendancy of Celtic customs. He thus signified his intention to enter upon the struggle as soon as the opportunity should present itself. It is not known whether he returned to Lindisfarne—at any rate he did not remain there. He was soon summoned to the court of the young Alchfrid, son of King Oswy, whom the latter had just associated in the kingdom. We have already noticed the touching friendship of Prince Alchfrid for the son of the cruel enemy of the Northumbrians, Penda of Mercia, and his influence on the conversion of the Mercians.[1]

This young prince, the son of a father who had been instructed in the school of the Scottish monks, and of a mother baptised and educated by the Romish missionaries, had inclined from his cradle

[1] Most historians have confounded this Alchfrid, eldest son of Oswy, with his younger brother Aldfrid. Bede, however, has carefully distinguished them by the orthography of their names, and Lappenberg has put this distinction beyond a doubt. Alchfrid, the eldest, who married a daughter of Penda in 653 and was the friend of Wilfrid, died before his father; Aldfrid, probably a natural son of Oswy, educated and for a long time protected at Iona, only returned to succeed Egfrid, the second son and successor of Oswy, and to be the implacable adversary of Wilfrid. See the genealogical table in the Appendix. It must be allowed, however, that the confusion which prevails throughout the primitive history of the Anglo-Saxons is greatly augmented by the fondness they had for giving to the children of one family names almost identical: thus, Oswald, Oswin, Oswulf, Osred, Osric, Ostrytha, in the dynasty of Northumbrian kings; Sebert, Sigebert, Sigehere, Sigeherd, in that of the kings of Essex; Ceawlin, Ceolric, Ceolwulf, Ceanwalch, Ceadwalla, in that of the kings of Wessex; Penda and Peada in Mercia, &c. This custom was not peculiar only to the royal families; the Bishop Ceadda had three brothers, Cedd, Cælin, and Cynnbill, all monks like himself.

to the religious exercises of his mother. He had always loved and sought to follow the Roman rules. At the news that the favourite of his mother, the young and noble Wilfrid, already so well known by his piety at Lindisfarne, had arrived from Rome, and was teaching the true Easter with all the regulations of the Church of St Peter, Alchfrid sent for him, received him like an angel come from God, and fell at his feet to demand his blessing. Then, after discussing thoroughly the usages of the Roman Church, he conjured him, in the name of God and St Peter, to remain with him, and instruct both himself and his people. Wilfrid willingly obeyed. To the irresistible attraction which, in his earliest youth, he had exercised over all hearts, there was now joined the authority of a man who had travelled, studied, and seen death and martyrdom close at hand. This increase of influence did but increase the affection of Alchfrid. The young prince and the young monk, one in soul, became still more one in heart; they loved each other with a passionate tenderness, which every day increased. The friendship of David and Jonathan, so often quoted by monastic annalists, appeared to the Northumbrians to be reproduced in that which existed between the son of their king and his youthful countryman.[1]

[1] "Catholicas Ecclesiæ regulas sequi semper et amare didicerat."—BEDE, v. 19. "Audiens servum Dei. . . . Verum Pascha prædicantem et S. Petri ecclesiæ disciplinam multiplicem didicisse, quam maxime rex diligebat. . . . Mirifice anima utriusque in alterum conglutinata erat,

New monastery of Wilfrid at Ripon, from which the monks who adhere to Celtic rites are expelled.

Wilfrid, with his Roman tonsure, and his ideas still more Roman, could not remain at Lindisfarne. Alchfrid therefore sought not merely to retain him near to himself, but also to create for him a great monastic establishment of which he should be the head, and from whence his influence might spread itself over the Northumbrian Church.[1] The young king had already founded a new monastery at Ripon, in a fine situation, at the confluence of two rivers, and in the very heart of Deira; he had given it to monks of the Celtic ritual, all the religious communities in the country being composed either of monks of Scottish origin or of Northumbrians educated by the Scots. The first occupants of Ripon had come from Melrose, under the conduct of Abbot Eata, one of the twelve young Saxons whom St Aïdan, the first Celtic missionary to Northumbria, chose for his future fellow-labourers; and had among them, in the capacity of steward, a young monk named Cuthbert, who was also destined to fill a great position, and to eclipse Wilfrid himself in the devotion of the northern English.[2]

sicut animam David et Jonathæ in alterum compaginatam legimus . . . de die in diem inter eos amor augebatur."—EDDIUS, c. 7.

[1] Eddi and Bede mention a former donation given by the young king to Wilfrid, and situated at Stanford or Stamford. But no important foundation resulted from this, and they do not even agree as to the position of the domain. We will merely remark that it supported only ten families, while that of Ripon sufficed for forty, according to the Saxon mode of valuing land.

[2] "Famulus Domini Cuthbertus officio præpositus hospitum."—BEDE, *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 7.

Alchfrid had endowed this foundation with a domain so large that it was inhabited by forty families. But soon, under the influence of those Roman predilections which the return of Wilfrid developed in his mind, he required the new community of Ripon to celebrate Easter at the date fixed by Rome, and to renounce the other customs in which the Celtic Church differed from that of Rome. They unanimously declared that they would rather go away and give up the sanctuary which had just been given them, than abandon their national traditions. Alchfrid took them at their word, and gave them their dismissal. Abbot Eata and the future St Cuthbert returned to Melrose, and Wilfrid was installed in their place by his royal friend, with the express intention of thus giving him the means of propagating the rules and doctrines which he preferred. Thus the war commenced—a war of which Wilfrid did not live to see the end, although he carried it on for more than half a century.[1] 661-664.

[1] Nothing can be more singular than the different manner in which the same historian gives an account of the same events in two different works. And this historian is no other than the venerable Bede! In his *Ecclesiastical History* he seems to treat the expelled monks as obstinate rebels: "Quia illi (qui Scottos sequebantur) data sibi optione maluerunt loco cedere quam mutare suam consuetudinem et Pascha catholicum cæterosque ritus canonicos juxta Romanæ et apostolicæ ecclesiæ consuetudinem recipere, dedit (Alchfridus) hoc illi quem melioribus imbutum disciplinis ac moribus vidit."—*Hist. Eccles.*, iii. 25, v. 19. In his life of Cuthbert he honours them as the victims of an unexpected storm: "Quia fragilis est et mare freti volubilis omnis seculi status, instante subito turbine, præfatus abbas Eata cum Cuthberto et ceteris quos secum ad-

Wilfrid was now at the brightest moment of his life. He employed the bounty of his friend to carry out the generous impulses of his heart, and scattered round him abundant alms; he saw the ideas so dear to him spreading and strengthening themselves; he rejoiced in the protection of a prince who was to him at once a brother and a son; and, to sum up all, he was almost as dear to the people of Deïra as to their king. The nobles and other Northumbrians idolised him, and regarded him as a prophet.[1]

Wilfrid is ordained priest by a Frankish bishop.

The young abbot, however, was not yet a priest; and it was the earnest desire of Alchfrid that his friend should be his confessor, and remain in some degree attached to his person.[2] The whole of Northumbria was then under the rule of Colman, the Celtic Bishop of Lindisfarne; but it was not from him that Wilfrid could have willingly received the sacrament of ordination. However, at this juncture the king received a visit from Agilbert, a Frenchman by birth, educated in Ireland, who, having become Bishop of the kingdom of Wessex, had lost half of his diocese because the king of the country, weary of listening to sermons which were not in Saxon, had chosen to constitute another

duxerat fratribus, domum repulsus est, et locus monasterii, quod condiderat, aliis ad incolendum monachis datur."—C. 8.

[1] "Non solum rex sanctum abbatem diligebat, sed omnis populus, nobiles et ignobiles eum habebant quasi prophetam Dei, ut erat."—EDDIUS.

[2] "Desiderante rege ut vir tantæ eruditionis et religionis sibi specialiter individuo comitatu sacerdos esset ac doctor."—BEDE, v. 19.

bishop without Agilbert's consent. He therefore, not willing to sanction this abuse of power, had renounced his see.[1] Although the King of Wessex was the intimate friend of Alchfrid, it was to the Northumbrian court that the displaced bishop first came to seek a refuge before returning to his own country. Alchfrid made known to him the virtue and good repute of Wilfrid, enlarging upon his humility, his fervour in prayer, his prudence, goodness, and sobriety—the latter being a virtue always greatly admired by the Anglo-Saxons, who practised it very little—and last, and above all, the gift which he had of commanding with authority and preaching with clearness. "Such a man is made to be a bishop," said Agilbert, who did not hesitate to ordain him priest in his monastery at Ripon, and, as Alchfrid had requested, for the personal service of the prince and his court.[2]

The influence of Wilfrid must have grown rapidly during the four or five years which followed his return to England, and he must have displayed great energy in his attack upon the Celtic spirit of the nation, to have brought about so promptly the decisive crisis which we are about to record. It must be remarked that he alone took the initiative and the responsibility. In this con- 639-663.

[1] See above, p. 103. Cf. Bede, iii. 7.

[2] "Dicens virum esse . . . sobrium . . . plenum auctoritatis . . . non vinolentum . . . et bene docentem sermone puro et aperto: ideo rogo te ut imponas super eum presbyteri gradum et sit mihi comes individuus. . . . Talis utique debet episcopus fieri."—Eddius, c. 9.

flict, the object of which was to secure the preponderance of Rome, we can find no trace of any mission or impulse whatever from Rome. The Roman colony of Canterbury, whose chief was an Anglo-Saxon, lent no direct assistance; and in Northumbria, as in the neighbouring kingdoms —converted to Christianity by Celtic apostles —Wilfrid found no aid except the recollection of the abortive efforts of the first Romish missionaries, or the limited influence possessed by priests who had accompanied princesses of the race of Hengist, when they entered by marriage other dynasties of the Anglo-Saxon descendants of Odin; unless it were the testimony of travellers who, arriving from Canterbury or France, might express their astonishment to see the northern Christians, converts of Scottish missionaries, celebrating Easter at a different time from the rest of Christendom.[1]

There was indeed one fact which might encourage him to attempt again, in another region and under circumstances far less favourable, the enterprise in which Augustin had failed. Of the four countries in which the Celtic Church reigned, Ireland, Wales, Scotland proper, and Northumbria, with their four monastic citadels of Bangor on the sea, Bangor on the Dee, Iona, and Lindisfarne, Ireland, the cradle and chief home of Celtic traditions, had begun in heart to return to Roman unity. Thirty years before, a council had been held

[1] Bede, l. c.

at Leighlin, in the south of the island, at the suggestion of Pope Honorius I., who had invited the Scots of Ireland to celebrate Easter according to the common practice of the Church. The fathers of this council, after much animated discussion, had decided that wise and humble men should be sent to Rome, as sons to their mother, to judge of the ceremonies there. These deputies declared, on their return, that they had seen the faithful from all parts of the world celebrating Easter on the same day at Rome. On their report the Romish cycle and rules relative to the paschal calculations were adopted by all the south of Ireland. This decision had been chiefly brought about by the efforts of a disciple and spiritual descendant of Columba, a monk named Cummian, then abbot of one of the Columbian monasteries in Ireland. Abbot Cummian[1] had been obliged to defend himself against the attacks which his partiality for Roman usages brought upon him, by an apologetic letter, still preserved, where his erudition displays itself in an innumerable throng of texts and calculations. He sums up in these decisive words: "Can there be imagined a pretension more perverse and ridiculous than that which says: Rome is mistaken, Jerusalem is mistaken, Alexandria is mistaken, Antioch is mistaken, the whole world is mistaken; the Scots and the Britons

Southern Ireland adopts the Romish Easter.

[1] He must not be confounded with Cumin called the White (Cumineus albus), Abbot of Iona from 657 to 669, author of the oldest biography of St Columba.

alone make no mistake?"[1] But the example of the south of Ireland did not affect the north of the island, and still less the Picts and Scots of Caledonia. The arguments of Cummian could not convince the direct successor of Columba, the Abbot of Iona.[2] He, and all his community, obstinately retained the Irish computation; and as it was precisely at this period that the missionaries sent from Ireland relighted in Northumbria the light of the faith, extinct since the death of King Edwin and the flight of Bishop Paulinus, it is easily apparent how it happened that the erroneous calculation of Easter, according to the Celts, took root everywhere together with the new doctrine. It is not even certain that Wilfrid was aware that anything favourable to his views had occurred in that part of Ireland which was furthest from Northumbria, for we do not find any mention of it in his acts or discourses.

The usage in Northumbria as to the celebration of Easter before Wilfrid.

As long as St Aïdan, the first Celtic apostle of Northumbria, lived, the idea of finding fault with his method of celebrating the greatest feast of that religion which he taught and practised so well, had entered into no man's mind. Whether he himself was ignorant of the difference of ritual, or whether, knowing it, he did not choose to with-

[1] "Quid pravius sentire potest de ecclesia matre quam si dicamus: Roma errat, Hierosolyma errat, Alexandria errat, totus mundus errat; soli Scoti et Britones rectum sapiunt!"—CUMMIANUS HIBERNUS, *Epist. de Controversia Paschali, in* USSERII *Sylloge*, ii.

[2] Segienus, descendant in the fourth degree from the grandfather of Columba, and fourth Abbot of Iona, from 623 to 652.—Cf. LANIGAN, *Eccles. Hist. of Ireland*, ii. 389. DÖLLINGER, *Kirchengeschichte*, p. 221.

draw himself from the usages of his race and of the parent monastery of Iona, he was not the less the object of universal confidence and veneration.[1] Under his successor, Bishop Finan, the question had been raised by one of the Lindisfarne monks, Irish by birth, who had travelled and studied in France and Italy. This monk, named Ronan, became involved in a violent quarrel with the Bishop of Northumbria upon the subject. He had led back a few to the Roman observance of Easter, and persuaded others to study the matter; but the bishop, harsh and passionate as Columba himself had sometimes been, far from being convinced, was only embittered by the remonstrances of Ronan, which served chiefly to make him a declared adversary of the Roman cause.[2]

When Finan died, leaving Bishop Colman—like himself, Irish by birth and a monk of Iona—as his successor at Lindisfarne, the dispute became at once open and general. Wilfrid had succeeded in sowing agitation and uncertainty in all minds; and the Northumbrians had come so far as to ask them- 662.

[1] The judgment of Bede on this aspect of the life of Aïdan deserves to be quoted at length, as much on account of its reserve as of its praises :—"Quod autem pascha non suo tempore observabat, vel canonicum ejus tempus ignorans, vel suæ gentis auctoritate ne agnitum sequeretur devictus, non adprobo, nec laudo. . . . Hæc dissonantia paschalis observantiæ vivente Ædano patienter ab omnibus tolerabatur qui patenter intellexerant, quia etsi pascha contra morem eorum qui ipsum miserant facere non potuit, opera tamen fidei, pietatis et dilectionis, juxta morem omnibus sanctis consuetum, diligenter exsequi curavit: unde ab omnibus etiam his qui de Pascha aliter sentiebant, merito diligebatur."—iii. 17, 25.

[2] "Quin potius, quod esset homo ferocis animi, acerbiorem castigando et apertum veritatis adversarium reddidit."—Bede, iii. 25.

selves whether the religion which had been taught to them, and which they practised, was indeed the religion of that Christ whose name it bore.[1]

Division in the royal family as to Easter.

The two Northumbrian kings mingled in the struggle on different sides. Oswy, the glorious vanquisher of Penda, the liberator of Northumbria, the conqueror and benefactor of Mercia, the Bretwalda or military and religious suzerain of the Anglo-Saxon confederacy, naturally exercised a much greater influence from that of his young son, whom he had associated with himself in the kingdom. And the mind of Oswy, who had been baptised and educated by Celtic monks, who spoke their language perfectly, and was probably desirous of conciliating the numerous Celtic populations who lived under his rule from the Irish Sea to the Firth of Forth, did not go beyond the instructions of his early masters.[2] Notwithstanding he had to contend within the circle of his family, not only with his son Alchfrid, excited in behalf of the Romish doctrine by his master and friend Wilfrid, but also with his queen, Eanfleda, who did not need the influence of Wilfrid to make her entirely devoted to the Roman cause, since, on returning from exile to marry Oswy, she had brought with her a Canterbury priest—Romanus by name, and

[1] "Unde movit hæc questio sensus et corda multorum, timentium ne forte, accepto Christianitatis vocabulo, in vacuum currerent aut cucurrissent."—BEDE, iii. 25.

[2] "Illorum lingua optime imbutus, nihil melius quam quod illi docuissent æstimabat."—BEDE, l. c.

Roman in heart—who guided her religious exercises. Under the direction of Romanus, the queen and all her court followed Roman customs. Two Easter feasts were thus celebrated every year in the same house; and as the Saxon kings had transferred to the chief festivals of the Christian year, and especially to the greatest of all, the meeting of their assemblies, and the occasion which those assemblies gave them of displaying all their pomp, it is easy to understand how painful it must have been for Oswy to sit, with his earls and thanes, at the great feast of Easter, at the end of a wearisome Lent, and to see the queen, with her maids of honour and her servants, persisting in fasting and penitence, it being with her still only Palm Sunday.[1]

This *discord*, as Bede says, with regard to Easter, was the capital point of the quarrel which divided the Anglo-Saxons into two bodies according as they had received the faith from Roman or Celtic missionaries. The differences remarked by Augustin in his struggles with the British clergy appear henceforward reduced to this one. The great reproach addressed to the Celtic clergy by the envoy of Pope Gregory, that they despised the work of converting the Saxons, is no longer in question. Our Celts of the North had succeeded only too well,

[1] "Observabat et regina Eanfleda cum suis juxta quod in Cantia fieri viderat. . . . Et cum rex Pascha dominicum solutis jejuniis faceret, tunc regina cum suis persistens adhuc in jejunio diem Palmarum celebrare." —Bede, l. c.

according to Wilfrid, in converting and even in ruling two-thirds of Saxon England. Nor at this phase of the quarrel is there any further mention either of baptismal ceremonies, or of the customs contrary to ecclesiastical celibacy,[1] or of any of the other points formerly contested. The difference of the two tonsures to which Wilfrid attached such great importance, and which must have struck from the first the eyes and attention of the Anglo-Saxon converts, is not even named in the long discussions of which we still possess a record.[2] All turn exclusively on the celebration of Easter.

In what the difference with regard to Easter consisted.

Nothing could be more fanciful and more complicated than this Pascal calculation; nothing more difficult to understand, and especially to explain. Let us try, however, to draw forth some clear ideas from the depths of the endless dissertations of contemporary authors and even of more recent historians. Since the earliest days of Christianity a division had existed as to the proper date for the celebration of Easter. Some churches of Asia Minor followed the custom of the Jews by placing it on the fourteenth day of the first lunar

[1] It is now clearly shown that, in the Celtic Church, the deacons and priests never strayed from the Romish doctrine of celibacy. Their continence has been attacked, as that of the Briton clergy by Gildas, but no one has been able to prove that they regarded marriage as a remedy for this incontinence. There were depraved priests, there were also clerks not having received the higher orders who lived with their wives—but nothing more, and especially no excuse for setting up, either as a doctrine or as a regular habit, the marriage of priests.

[2] However, Bede, who has preserved all these discussions, says, in speaking of the tonsure: "Et de hoc questio non minima erat."—iii. 26.

month of the year. But all the churches of the West, of Palestine, and of Egypt, fixed upon the Sunday after the fourteenth day of the month nearest to the vernal equinox, so as not to keep the feast along with the Jews, and the general Council of Nice erected this custom into a law of the Church. Those who had not accepted this law, but persisted in celebrating the fourteenth day, were held as heretics and schismatics, under the name of *quartodecimans*. The imputation of complicity in this heresy made against the Celtic Church by the chiefs of the Roman clergy in a bull addressed in 640, during the vacancy of the Holy See, to the bishops and abbots of the north of Ireland, was most unjust.[1] The only mistake made by the Celts was that of neglecting to keep themselves informed of the difficulties which arose as to the manner of determining the commencement of the first lunar month, which ought to be the Pascal month. As has been already said in respect to the dispute between St Augustin and the Britons of Cambria,[2] they had remained faithful to the custom which prevailed at Rome itself when Patrick and the other missionaries to the British Isles brought thence the light of the Gospel. At that period, in Rome and in all the West, the ancient Jewish cycle of eighty-four years was universally followed to fix this date. The Christians of Alexandria, however, better astronomers than those of Rome, and specially charged by

[1] Bede, ii. 19.

[2] See vol. iii. p. 380.

the Council of Nice to inform the Pope of the date of Easter of each year, discovered in this ancient cycle some errors of calculation, and after two centuries of disputes they succeeded in making the Roman Church adopt a new Pascal cycle, that which is now universally received, and which limits the celebration of Easter to the interval between the 22d of March and the 24th of April. The Celtic churches had no knowledge of this change, which dated from the year 525—that is to say, from a time when the invasions of the Saxons probably intercepted their habitual communications with Rome : they retained their old Jewish cycle of eighty-four years, and adhered obstinately to it. They celebrated Easter always on Sunday, but this Sunday was not always the one which had been appointed by the Romish Church after the new calculations. Thus it happened that King Oswy was eight days in advance of his wife, and complained of having to rejoice alone in the resurrection of Christ, while the queen was still commemorating the commencement of the passion in the services for Palm Sunday.

On this diversity, then, which was in appearance so slight and trifling, turned the great dispute between the Celtic and Roman monks, between those who had first begun the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons, and those who had so happily completed it. It is amazing to note the vehemence and the duration of a dispute so bitter on a subject so insignificant. Certainly there was something

painful in being unable to persuade the new believers to celebrate the greatest festival of their religion on the same day; but, on the other hand, it is evident that all these Catholics must have been profoundly agreed as to the important questions of faith and practice, since they could attach so much weight to a difference of astronomical calculation.

Moderation of the Romish Church during all this struggle.

Let us at the same time remark that throughout this controversy the Roman Church displayed an exemplary moderation, and always acted in conformity with the paternal instructions given by St Gregory the Great to St Augustin. She did not impose upon Wilfrid the mission he had taken upon himself. It was not at Rome, but at Lyons, that he received that tonsure which the Romans themselves do not seem to have taken much pains about. Rome never treated as schismatics or heretics those Celtic dissidents, the most illustrious of whom, Columbanus of Luxeuil and Aïdan of Lindisfarne, have always had a place in her martyrology. She never proceeded otherwise than by way of counsel and exhortation, without insisting on violent measures, and patiently awaiting the returning calm of excited spirits, giving to all an example of prudence, moderation, and charity.[1]

[1] "Der Römischer Stuhl benahm sich im ganzen auch hier mit der ihm eigenen umsichtigen Weisheit und Liberalität." This is the testimony rendered by the illustrious Döllinger in his excellent account of this controversy, *Handbuch der Kirchengeschichte*, i. 2, 227. The learned historiographer of the Irish Church, Lanigan, professor of theology at Pavia, who wrote about 1828, quotes the excesses of the ultra-orthodox English converts, who would admit nothing to be good, or even tolerable,

A competition for influence mingles with the ritualistic dispute.

On the other hand, it is clearly evident that under the veil of a question purely ritual, was hidden one of political and personal influence. The precocious greatness of Wilfrid and his ambitious fervour might well awaken hostility among the clergy and nobles of Northumbria; his pretensions, which seemed so many audacious innovations, were of a kind to wound a people but recently converted, and instinctively inclined to attach great importance to the external forms of the new faith. But it was above all a struggle of race and influence. On one side the Celtic spirit, proud, independent, and passionate, of which the great Abbot of Iona was the type, and of which his sons, the apostles of Northumbria, were the representatives; on the other, the spirit of Rome, the spirit of discipline and authority, imperfectly personified by its first envoys, Augustine and Paulinus, but endowed with a very different degree of vigour and missionary energy, since the moment when an Anglo-Saxon of the type of Wilfrid had constituted himself its champion. England was the stake of this game. All the future of that Christianity which had been so laboriously planted in the island, depended on its issue.

Parliament of Whitby. 664.

It is this which gives a truly historical interest to the famous conference of Whitby, convoked by King Oswy, for the purpose of regulating and ter-

except what was practised at Rome, even in matters which the Romans themselves held of no importance, vol. iii. p. 68.

minating the dispute which troubled his kingdom and the neighbouring countries. He desired that the question should be publicly debated in his presence, and in that of the *Witenagemot*, or parliament, composed not only of the principal ecclesiastics and laymen of the country, but of all those who had a right to sit in the national councils of the Anglo-Saxons. It is to be remarked that here, for the first time in the history of these assemblies, a sort of division into two chambers like that which has become the fundamental principle of parliamentary institutions is visible. Bede states that the king consulted the nobles and the commoners, those who were seated and those who stood round, precisely like the lords and commons of our own days.[1]

Composition of the assembly.

The place chosen for the assembly was on the sea-coast, and in the centre of the two Northumbrian kingdoms, at Streaneshalch or Whitby, in the double monastery of monks and nuns governed by the illustrious Hilda, a princess of the Northumbrian blood-royal, who was now fifty years of age, and thus joined to the known sanctity of her life[2]

The Celtic party.

[1] "Hæc dicente rege, elevatis in cœlum manibus, faverunt adsidentes quique, sive adstantes, majores una cum mediocribus."—BEDE. "Beisitzende und umstehende, Adel und Gemeine."—LAPPENBERG, p. 165. This reminds one of the famous passage of Tacitus: "De minoribus rebus principes consultant; de majoribus omnes: ita tamen, ut ea quoque quorum penes plebem arbitrium est, apud principes pertractentur."—*De Mor. Germ.*

[2] "Præsenti Sancta-Moniali piissima Hilda." Such is the testimony borne to her by Eddi, the biographer of Wilfrid, whose adversary she always was.

maturity of age and experience sufficient for the government of souls. Although baptised by Bishop Paulinus at the time of the first Romish mission
627. to the court of her grand-uncle King Edwin, she was completely devoted to Celtic traditions, doubtless from attachment to the sainted Bishop Aïdan, from whom she had received the veil. Her whole community were of the same party which had been hitherto favoured by King Oswy, and was naturally represented by Colman, Bishop of Lindisfarne, at that time the only prelate in the vast kingdom of Northumbria. He, with all his Celtic clergy, attended the council, as well as Cedd, a monk of Lindisfarne, who had become Bishop of the East Saxons, among whom he had re-established the episcopal see of London, after the expulsion of the Romish missionaries. Bishop Cedd, Anglo-Saxon by birth, but educated in Ireland before he became a monk in the Hiberno-Scottish monastery of Lindisfarne,[1] was to act as interpreter in the conference between the Celts on one side and those who spoke only Latin or English on the other, and he acquitted himself of these functions with a most watchful impartiality.

The Roman party.

The side opposed to the Celts had at its head the young King Alchfrid and the Bishop Agilbert; the latter, though educated in Ireland, not having

[1] At least this is to be supposed from the comparison of different passages of Bede (iii. 23, 28; iv. 3), on the youth of the two brother bishops, Cedd and Ceadda.

hesitated to embrace the cause of those Roman customs which prevailed in France, his native country. Wilfrid was the soul of the discussion he had so warmly desired, and its special orator: he appeared in the arena in all the glow of youth and talent, but supported by two venerable representatives of Roman missions to England—the priest Romanus, who had accompanied the Queen from Canterbury; and James, the aged, courageous, and modest deacon, sole relic and sole surviving witness of the first conversion of Northumbria under the father of Eanfleda, who had remained alone, after the flight of St Paulinus, for nearly forty years, evangelising Northumbria and observing Easter according to the Roman custom, with all those whom he had preserved or restored to the faith.

All being assembled, perhaps in one of the halls of the great monastery of St Hilda, but more likely, from the great numbers, in the open air on the green platform which then, as now, surmounted the abrupt cliffs of Whitby, and from whence the eye wanders far over those waves which bore the Saxons to the shores of Great Britain; King Oswy opened the proceedings by saying that as they all served the same God and hoped for the same heaven, it was advisable that they should follow the same rule of life and the same observance of the holy sacraments, and that it would therefore be well to examine which was the true tradition they ought

The king opens the conference.

to follow. He then commanded his bishop, Colman, to speak first, to explain his ritual, and to justify its origin. "I have," said the Bishop of Lindisfarne, "received the Pascal usage which I follow from my predecessors who placed me here as bishop; all our fathers have observed the same custom; these fathers and their predecessors, evidently inspired by the Holy Ghost, as was Columba of the Cell, followed the example of John the apostle and evangelist, who was called the friend of our Lord. We keep Easter as he did, as did Polycarp and all his disciples of old. In reverence for our ancestors we dare not, and we will not, change."[1] Then the king gave leave to Agilbert to speak, that he might describe the reasons of his different observance; but the poor bishop, remembering that he had lost his vast diocese of Wessex through his imperfect knowledge of Anglo-Saxon,[2] begged that his disciple Wilfrid might be allowed to speak in his place. "We think precisely alike," said Agilbert, "but he can better express our thoughts in English, than I could through an interpreter."[3] Then Wilfrid began, "We keep Easter as we have seen it kept by all Christians at Rome, where the blessed apostles, St Peter and St Paul,

[1] "Patres nostri et antecessores eorum manifeste Spiritu Sancto inspirati, ut erat Columcille. . . . Nec hoc audemus pro patribus nostris, nec volumus mutare."—EDDIUS, c. 10.

[2] See above, page 102.

[3] "Loquatur, obsecro, vice mea discipulus meus Wilfridus presbyter; ille melius ipsa lingua Anglorum quam ego per interpretem."—BEDE, iii. 25.

lived, taught, suffered, and are buried. We have seen the same rule observed in Italy and in Gaul, where we have studied; we know that it is so in Africa, in Asia, in Egypt, in Greece, and throughout Christendom, in spite of all difference of language and of country. It is only the Picts and Britons who, occupying the two most remote islands of the ocean, nay, but a part even of those islands, foolishly persist in contradicting all the rest of the world."[1]

Colman replied, "It is strange that you speak of our traditions as absurd, when we only follow the example of the great apostle who was thought worthy to lay his head upon the breast of our Saviour, and whom the whole world has judged to be so wise." The dialogue then continued in a less excited manner. In this discussion the bishop displayed the natural haughtiness of his race, and the abbot that persuasive eloquence already so dear to the Anglo-Saxons, who were charmed to hear their own barbarous language spoken perfectly by a man cultivated and formed by the learning of Italy and Gaul. As for the question itself, both had recourse to extremely poor arguments. Wilfred quoted Scripture, where there is not a single word as to the Pascal cycle, and the decretals of the universal Church, of which only one relates to the matter, that of the Council of Nice, which contents

[1] "Præter hos tantum et obstinationis eorum complices, Pictos dico et Britones, cum quibus de duabus ultimis oceani insulis, et his non totis, contra totum orbem stulto labore pugnant. . . . Mirum quare stultum appellare velitis laborem nostrum."—Bede, l. c.

itself with the decision that Easter should always be celebrated on Sunday, a particular which the Irish observed equally with the Romans. Instead of limiting himself to the statement that the rules established at Rome had been and ought to be adopted everywhere, he also affirmed that St Peter had established the custom then followed at Rome, as if that custom had been always the same, and had not, in fact, been changed nearly a century before, to be brought into accordance with the best astronomical calculations. But Bishop Colman either knew nothing or understood nothing of this change, and was not able to cite it against his adversary. He perpetually recurred to the examples of St John and the fathers of the Celtic Church, and with more vehemence still quoted Columba, whose life, so minutely described by the contemporaries of this very council of Whitby,[1] contains no trace of peculiar attachment to the Celtic Easter, but shows that he merely followed with simplicity the ancient usage transmitted by St Patrick to the Irish monks. Nothing gives us reason to suppose that the great Abbot of Iona, if once informed of the universal prevalence of the Roman custom, would have been opposed to it.

[1] The first of these biographers, Cumin the White, was at that very time Abbot of Iona, from whence Colman came; and the second Adamnan, then a monk in Ireland, was already forty years old in 664. The latter does not mention the Pascal difference except to relate the prophecy of Columba during his visit to Clonmacnoise, "De illa quæ post dies multos ob diversitatem paschalis festi orta est inter Scotiæ ecclesias discordia."—Lib. i. c. 3.

"Can we admit," said Bishop Colman, "that our most venerable father Columba, and his successors, men beloved of God, have acted contrary to the Divine Word? Many of them have given proof of their sanctity by miracles; and as for me, who believe in that sanctity, I choose to follow for ever their teaching and their example." Here Wilfrid had the better of the argument. "As to your father Columba and his disciples, with their miracles, I might answer that, at the day of judgment, many will say to our Lord, that they have done miracles in His name, and He will answer that He never knew them. But God keep me from speaking thus of your father! it is better, when one is ignorant, to believe good than evil. I do not therefore deny that they were servants of God, and beloved by Him: no doubt they loved Him in their rustic simplicity, with the most pious intentions. I do not think there was much harm in their observance of Easter, because no one had told them of more perfect rules. If a Catholic calculator had been presented to them, I believe they would have followed his counsel as they followed the commandments of God which they knew. But as for you, without doubt you sin, if, after having heard the decretals of the Apostolic See, and even of the universal Church, confirmed by Holy Scripture, you still despise them. Even admitting the sanctity of your fathers, how can you prefer, to the Church spread over the whole earth, this handful

of saints in one corner of a remote island? Finally, for your Columba (and I would willingly say our Columba, so far as he was the servant of Christ), however holy or powerful by his virtues he may have been, can we place him before the chief of the apostles, to whom our Lord himself said—'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven'?"[1]

Close of the king's speech.

The Saxon king then addressed his bishop, "Is it true, Colman, that these words were said by our Lord to St Peter?" "It is true, O king," was the answer. "Can you, then," rejoined the king, "show me a similar authority given to your Columba?" "No," said the bishop. "You are then," continued the king, "both agreed that the keys of heaven were given to Peter by our Lord?" "Yes," answered the two adversaries together. "Then," said the king, "I say, like you, that he is the por-

[1] "Justius multo est de incognitis bonum credere, quam malum; unde et illos Dei famulos et Dei dilectos esse non nego, qui simplicitate rustica, sed intentione pia Deum dilexerunt . . . quos utique credo, si quis tunc ad eos catholicus calculator advenerat. . . . Etsi enim patres tui sancti fuerint, numquid universali quæ per orbem est ecclesiæ Christi, eorum est paucitas uno de angulo extremæ insulæ præferenda. Etsi sanctus erat et potens virtutibus ille Columba vester, immo et noster si Christi erat."—BEDE, iii. 25. The dubious and slightly disdainful tone used by the young Wilfrid in speaking of the great Columba, of whose life he was evidently ignorant, is remarkable. However, this speech is only found in Bede, himself singularly hostile to Columba. Eddi, the contemporary and companion of Wilfrid, attributes to him much more humble language, of which he quotes little. Fleury, relating this scene, believes that he spoke against St Columbanus of Luxeuil.

ter of heaven, and that I will not oppose him, but, on the contrary, obey him in all things, lest, when I reach the doors of the celestial kingdom, there be no one to open them for me if I am the adversary of him who carries the keys. In all my life I will neither do nor approve anything or any person that may be contrary to him."[1]

The whole assembly approved this conclusion of the king by vote, holding up their hands, both the nobles who were seated, and the freemen who stood round,[2] and all decided to adopt the Roman custom. The sitting ended without any discussion of the other contested points, which, no doubt, were regarded as settled by the first decision. Of the three bishops who had taken part in the deliberation, Agilbert, ex-Bishop of the Western Saxons, embarked for his own country, and Cedd, Bishop of the East Saxons, who had acted as interpreter to the two adverse parties, renounced the customs of Lindisfarne, in which he had been educated, and returned to his diocese of London to spread the Roman usages there.

The assembly adopts the Romish usages.

But Colman, Bishop of the Northern Anglo-Saxons, refused to recognise the decision of the council. He could not resign himself to see his doctrine despised, and his spiritual ancestors de-

Bishop Colman protests, abdicates, and returns to Iona.

[1] "Ille est ostiarius et clavicularius, contra quem concluctationem controversiæ et judiciorum ejus in vita mea non facio, nec facientibus consentio."—EDDIUS, c. 10. Cf. BEDE, l. c.

[2] "Hæc dicente rege, elevatis in cœlum manibus, faverunt adsidentes quique, sive adstantes."—BEDE.

preciated ; he feared, also, the anger of his countrymen, who would not have pardoned his defection.[1] Notwithstanding the affection and veneration showed for him by King Oswy, he determined to abandon his diocese. Accordingly, taking with him all the Lindisfarne monks of Scottish origin, who would neither give up the Celtic Easter nor shave their heads in Roman fashion, he left Northumbria for ever, and went to Iona to consult the fathers of the order, or family of St Columba. He carried with him the bones of his predecessor St Aïdan, the founder of Lindisfarne, and first Celtic evangelist of Northumbria, as if the ungrateful land had become unworthy to possess these relics of a betrayed saint, and witnesses of a despised apostleship. Undoubtedly this holy bishop, whose virtues, like those of his predecessors, draw, in this supreme hour, an eloquent and generous homage from the venerable Bede, would have done better to have yielded and remained in his diocese conforming to the customs of Rome. But what heart is so cold as not to understand, to sympathise, and to journey with him along the Northumbrian coast and over the Scottish mountains, where, bearing homewards the bones of his father, the proud but vanquished spirit returned to his northern mists, and buried in the sacred isle of Iona his defeat and his unconquerable fidelity to the traditions of his race ?

[1] "Propter timorem patriæ suæ."—EDDIUS, l. c. "Videns spretam suam doctrinam, sectamque esse despectam."—BEDE, iii. 26. Cf. iv. 4.

CHAPTER II.

WILFRID, BISHOP OF YORK, AND THE GREEK MONK THEODORE, PRIMATE OF ENGLAND.

Colman founds a half-Saxon, half-Celtic monastic colony in Ireland.—He is succeeded in Northumbria by the Anglo-Saxon Eata as prior of Lindisfarne, and by Tuda, an Irishman converted to the Romish ritual, as bishop.—Dedication of the great Monastery of Peterborough, founded by the Christian descendants of Penda, the last pagan leader; at which Mercians and Northumbrians, Celts and Romanists, are present together; speech of King Wulphere.—Pestilence of 664; death of Tuda; Wilfrid elected Bishop of Northumbria.—Treating the Anglo-Saxon bishops as schismatics, he goes to be consecrated by the Bishop of Paris at Compiègne, and removes his see from Lindisfarne to York.—On his return he is shipwrecked on the coast of Sussex, and fights with the natives.—Celtic reaction against Wilfrid; King Oswy replaces him during his absence by an Irish abbot, Ceadda.—Sanctity and popularity of Ceadda.—The Northumbrians observe the decree of Whitby as to the celebration of Easter, but refuse to retain Wilfrid as bishop.—He retires to his Monastery of Ripon.—He resides with the Kings of Mercia and of Kent.—He assists the holy Queen Ermenilda in completing the conversion of the Mercians.—He introduces the Gregorian chant and the Benedictine rule into Northumbria.—The Kings of Kent and Northumbria leave to the Pope the choice of the new metropolitan of Canterbury.—The Pope chooses a Greek monk Theodore, and associates with him Adrian, an African, and the Anglo-Saxon Benedict Biscop.—They are all three seized on their way by Ebroïn, but released.—The pontificate of St Theodore, the first metropolitan recognised by all England.—He re-establishes Wilfrid in the see of York, who makes Ceadda bishop of the Mercians.—Holy and peaceful death of Ceadda.—Theodore and Adrian visit all England.—Theodore's ecclesiastical legislation: his book of penance. He consecrates the Celtic Cathedral of Lindisfarne.—He creates the parochial system as it now exists, and holds the first Anglo-Saxon council at Hertford.—He fails in

increasing the number of bishoprics, but introduces the Benedictine order into the monasteries.—Literary development of the English monasteries due to Theodore and Adrian.—The Church of England is constituted, and the English nation becomes a lever in the hands of the Papacy.

Colman founds a monastic colony in Ireland.

It was not only the priests of Celtic origin, Irish or Scotch, who refused to sanction by their presence the introduction of Roman practices at Lindisfarne; Colman was also accompanied by thirty Anglo-Saxon monks, perfectly versed in the study and offices of monastic life, who preferred the Celtic observances to those of Rome. After a short sojourn at Iona, he led these emigrants to his native country, and established himself with them in a desert island on the west coast of Ireland called *Innisbowen*, or the Isle of the White Heifer, a name it still retains. But when confined in this islet, beaten by the waves of the great ocean, the Anglo-Saxons, whose devotion to Celtic tradition had been strong enough to sever them from their country, were unable to live amicably with the Irish, their former companions at Lindisfarne. They quarrelled about a purely material matter, which manifests even thus early the natural incompatibility of the two races who were destined afterwards upon Irish soil to fight more cruel battles. The Irish monks wandered all the summer through about their favourite spots, probably in many instances their native places; but on their return in winter they expected to share the harvest which their English brethren had painfully culti-

vated and gathered in.[1] Colman was obliged to separate them; leaving the Irish in their island, he installed the Anglo-Saxons in a monastery which, under the name of Mayo, flourished greatly, and which a century later still continued to be occupied by English monks, fervent and laborious, who had, however, returned from Celtic usages to the orthodox rule, and probably to Benedictine discipline, which Wilfrid had established at the same time as he introduced conformity to the usages of Rome.

The new prelates in Northumbria.

Colman, however, while withdrawing from Lindisfarne all his Celtic countrymen, and those of the Anglo-Saxons who sympathised with them, had no intention of handing over definitely to the enemy the sacred isle in which his predecessors had delighted to recognise a new Iona. Before setting out on his voluntary exile, he begged his friend King Oswy to allow the remaining monks at Lindisfarne to take for their superior that Eata whom Aïdan had chosen among his twelve first Northumbrian disciples, and who, out of love to Celtic traditions, had given up the monastery at Ripon, in which Wilfrid succeeded him, and had again become abbot of Melrose—that is to say, of the novitiate establish-

[1] "Eo quod Scotti tempore æstatis quo fruges erant colligendæ, relicto monasterio, per nota sibi loca dispersi vagarentur; ut vero hieme succedente redirent, et his quæ Angli præparaverant, communiter uti desiderarent."—BEDE, iv. 4. Is not this precisely the fable of the Grasshopper and the Ant? and is it not curious to discover, in a hidden corner of monkish history, a fresh proof of the radical difference and fatal incompatibility of the two races, Celtic and Saxon? This intractable Bishop Colman died in 674 or 676; he is reckoned among the saints of the Irish martyrology.

ment of the Celtic monks in Northumbria. The king consented, and the confidant and friend of Colman became superior of Lindisfarne, with the title of prior, but the full authority of an abbot.

After this it became necessary to proceed immediately to replace Colman as bishop of all Northumbria. His successor was one of his own countrymen, who resided in the diocese, and, indeed, during the pontificate of Colman, had been famed for his virtues and apostolical activity. This monk, named Tuda, had been educated in the monasteries of southern Ireland ; he had already conformed to the Roman ritual in the questions of the celebration of Easter and the form of the tonsure—these customs having been, it is said, adopted thirty years before by the district of Ireland to which he belonged. It was only, therefore, by his Celtic origin that he was attached to the ancient traditions of the diocese. He died some months afterwards of a terrible pestilence, which in this year, 664, made cruel ravages in the British Isles. He was the last of the Celtic bishops of Northumbria.[1]

Before his death, however, there occurred a great religious and national solemnity, at which he was present, and which was celebratedin this same critical year of 664, so decisive, under more than one aspect, for England. This solemnity seems to have

[1] "Famulus Christi Tuda qui erat apud Scottos austrinos eruditus, atque ordinatus episcopus, habens juxta morem provinciæ illius coronam tonsuræ ecclesiasticæ et catholicam temporis paschalis regulam observans." —Bede, iii. 26.

united in sincere and unanimous enthusiasm all the principal personages of the most important states of the Heptarchy, and it exhibits, in a special degree, the increasing ascendancy of that Roman influence of which Wilfrid was henceforward the victorious champion. Its object was the dedication of a new monastery in Mercia, the kingdom which had been so long the stronghold of Saxon paganism and the seat of an obstinate resistance to the missionary spirit of Northumbria.

Conversion to Christianity of the descendants of Penda.

By one of those transformations so frequent among the Germanic races at the period of their entrance into the Christian life, all the descendants of the fierce Penda, the most obstinate and invincible of pagans, were destined to become intrepid champions of Christianity, or models of monastic life. Of his eight children who are known to us, three sons who reigned successively distinguished themselves by their religious zeal, the third becoming a monk after a reign of thirty years; while three daughters, two of whom are counted among the saints of the English calendar, ended their lives in the cloister. The eldest son, Peada, who was son-in-law of Oswy, brother-in-law and friend of Alchfrid, and the earliest Christian of Mercia, continued to reign over one part of the kingdom, even after the defeat and death of his father, who perished under the avenging sword of Oswy. The father-in-law and son-in-law, united more closely by their faith than the

father and son had been by the ties of blood, determined to consecrate their alliance by founding a great monastery in honour of God and St Peter, and chose for this purpose a retired situation in the east of Mercia.

Foundation of Peterborough.

Such was the origin of the Abbey of Peterborough, the burgh or castle of St Peter,[1] the most ancient of those famous houses destined to rise successively in the midst of the vast fens which formed a sort of natural frontier between the eastern and central Saxons, between Mercia and East Anglia.

656.

Peada died a violent death when the work was but beginning.[2] But it was taken up, and continued by his young brother Wulphere, whom the Mercians, in revolt from Northumbrian domination, had chosen for their chief, who had been, like his elder brother, baptised by the second Celtic bishop of Lindisfarne,[3] and who always showed an ardent zeal for the extension and consolidation of Christianity in his kingdom. His younger brothers and his two sisters, one of them the wife of the young King Alchfrid of Northumbria, the friend of Peada and Wilfrid, and all the *witan*—that is to say, the wise men and nobles, whether lay or ecclesiasti-

[1] It was at first called Medehamstede, which means *the house in the meadow*.

[2] By the treachery of his wife, daughter of Oswy, and sister of his friend Alchfrid, who, having married Peada's sister, was doubly his brother-in-law.—BEDE, iii. 24. *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ad an. 665.

[3] *Act. SS. Bolland.*, vol. ii. February, p. 689.

cal, of his public council[1]—encouraged him to the utmost in finishing the first great monastic foundation in their vast territory.

Solemn dedication of Peterborough. 664.

The abbot appointed from the beginning of the work was a monk named Sexwulf, descended from a great and noble family, devoted to the service of God, and much beloved by the Mercian Saxons. King Wulphere enjoined him to spare nothing to complete his brother's work magnificently, promising to be answerable for all the expense. When the building was finished the King of Mercia invited, for the day of consecration, the King of Northumbria, who was his godfather although he had become his political adversary, and whose dignity of Bretwalda entitled him to preside at the grand solemnities of the Saxon people; and with him the two kings of the neighbouring states of Essex and East Anglia, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop of Rochester,[2] who were the first Anglo-Saxon monks raised to the episcopate; Wini, who had taken the place of Agilbert as Bishop of the Saxons of the West;[3] the two bishops of Mercia and Northumbria,[4] both edu-

[1] *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle:* Gibson's ed., Latin-Saxon text, p. 34; Giles's ed., English text, p. 321.

[2] Frithona and Ithamar.

[3] He was soon expelled from this usurped diocese; but thanks to the protection of Wulphere, he became Bishop of London, purchasing the see, according to Bede, who does not explain how the King of Mercia could dispose of the bishopric of the East Saxons.—*Eccles. Hist.*, iii. 7, 28. Lappenberg concludes that Wulphere became Bretwalda after the death of Oswy.

[4] Jaruman and Tuda.

cated in Celtic monasteries; and, last of all, Wilfrid, on whom all eyes had been turned by his late victories. Around these distinguished guests, both lay and ecclesiastical, were ranged all the earls and thanes, or great landed proprietors of the kingdom.[1] It was therefore really a great political assembly as well as a religious one. When the Archbishop had ended the ceremony of dedication, and consecrated the monastery to St Peter, St Paul, and St Andrew, King Wulphere, placing himself in the midst of his family and his nobles, spoke thus:—"Thanks be to the most high and almighty God for the good deed which I do today in honour of Christ and St Peter! All, as many as are here present, be witnesses and sureties of the donation which I make to St Peter, to the Abbot Sexwulf and his monks, of the land and water, the fens and brooks here mentioned. . . . It is a trifling gift; but I will that they hold and possess it so royally and freely that no impost may be levied upon it, and that the monastery may be subject to no other power on earth, except the Holy See of Rome, for it is hither that those of us who cannot go to Rome will come to seek and to visit St Peter. I implore you, my brother, and you, my sisters, be witnesses to this for the good of your souls, and sign it with your

[1] "Et ibi fuerunt omnes illius thani quotquot essent in suo regno. . . . Cum comitibus, cum ducibus, et cum thanis."—*Chron. Anglo-Sax.*, p. 35. Cf. Hook, *Lives of the Archbishops*, t. i. p. 131.

hands. I implore those who shall succeed me, whether my sons, my brothers, or others, to maintain this donation, as they wish to obtain eternal life, and to escape eternal torment. Whoever shall take away from it, or add to it, may the keeper of the celestial gates take away from, or add to, his part in heaven." The four kings, the five bishops, the two brothers and two sisters of the king, the earls and lords, successively signed the act of donation with the sign of the cross, repeating this formula, "I confirm it by my mouth and by the cross of Christ."[1] The document which contained the donation having been drawn up in accordance with the royal speech, the four kings and two princesses signed it first, then the bishops, and after them Wilfrid, who describes himself on this occasion as a "priest, servant of the Churches, and bearer of the Gospel among the nations."[2]

Immediately following upon these events, came a

[1] All these details are taken from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the most important and most authentic of all the historic monuments of the Anglo-Saxon epoch, after the History of Bede. Kemble, and after him several recent authors, see only modern interpolations in these passages relating to the Abbey of Peterborough, but give no direct proof of this opinion. Kemble, however, describes the consent of the assembly, half lay and half clerical, to the king's donation. (*Codex Diplomat.*, n° 984.) M. Augustin Thierry has quoted the speech of Wulphere as authentic (*Hist. de la Conquête*, t. i. p. 88, edit. of 1846), and I do not see any reason for not following his example. The most complete version of the deed is in Dugdale's *Monasticon* (vol. i. p. 63). There will be found in the Appendix some notes on the present condition of this famous abbey.

[2] "Ego Wilfridus presbyter, famulus ecclesiarum, et bajulus evangelii Dei in gentes, affectavi."

terrible pestilence, which ravaged England, and chose its most illustrious victims among those prelates of whom we have been speaking. It carried off first Bishop Cedda, who had acted as interpreter at Whitby, and his thirty friends, of whose touching death at Lastingham we have already heard;[1] and after him the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Northumbria, both of whom had signed the deed of dedication of the new monastery of St Peter.[2] It became necessary, therefore, to provide for the see which the death of Tuda had left vacant, that of Northumbria, the largest and most important of all the English bishoprics. The Roman party believed itself so strong as to be able to disregard the tradition, not yet very venerable, which made that great see the right of the Celtic monks. They determined to go further back, to the recollections of the first mission sent from Rome, which, passing by Canterbury, was established at York by the Benedictine Paulinus. Besides this, the young king, Alchfrid, was impatient to see his friend Wilfrid master of spiritual authority in the kingdom which had been brought back by him to unity with Rome. He obtained the consent of his father, the Bretwalda Oswy, and both together reassembled the Witenagemot, to proceed to the election of a bishop, whose determination it should be to make Roman usages the law of his conduct. The Northumbrian

Wilfrid is promoted to the bishopric. 664.

[1] Page 109.

[2] Bede, iii. 25, 28, &c.

thanes, consulted by the two kings, replied with one voice that no one in the whole country could be more worthy of the episcopate than Wilfrid, who was already priest and abbot. He himself was present at the assembly, and wished at first to decline the election. But he was commanded in the name of the Lord, and on the part of the kings and people of Northumbria, to submit his will to their unanimous choice.[1]

This was a great victory for the Roman observances. It was never forgiven by the vanquished, and Wilfrid had to bear the penalty during all the remainder of his life. The Northumbrian dissenters submitted to the decision of Whitby, but they retained an implacable antipathy to the conqueror. The great Abbess Hilda, the Celtic monks of Lindisfarne, all those who remained faithful to the sacred memory of St Aïdan, and to that still more venerated, of Columba, appeared to have taken against Wilfrid the oath of Hannibal. Reduced to powerlessness on the Pascal question, in respect to which they could not struggle against Rome with the whole Church at her back, they regained the advantage when only the person of Wilfrid was concerned, who, dear as he was to the king's son,

[1] "Reges concilium cum sapientibus suæ gentis . . . inierunt, quem eligerent in sedem vacantem, qui voluisset sedis apostolicæ doctrinam sibi facere et alios docere. . . . Neminem habemus meliorem et digniorem nostræ gentis quam Wilfridum . . . consenserunt reges et omnis populus huic electioni, et Wilfridum omnis conventus in nomine Domini accipere gradum episcopalem præcepit."—EDDIUS, c. 2.

was perhaps for that very reason less liked by Oswy, who, though he adopted the Roman Easter, could not destroy all traces of attachment to the ideas and customs of his youth.

He does not wish to be consecrated by any English bishop.

Wilfrid, meantime, chose this occasion to exhibit, yet more than at Whitby, the bigoted and exclusive side of his character. He would not be consecrated by any of the bishops of his own country, not even by the Metropolitan of Canterbury. Although they were all in communion with the Holy See, and though many of them are still venerated as saints,[1] he took upon himself, on his own authority, to class them with schismatics. "My lord kings," he said, "I must first of all consider the best means of reaching the episcopate according to your election, without exposing myself to the reproaches of true Catholics. There are in this island many bishops whom it is not my business to accuse, but they have ordained Britons and Scots whom the Apostolic See has not received into communion, because it does not receive those that hold communion with schismatics.[2] I therefore humbly beseech you to send me into Gaul, where there are many Catholic bishops, so that I may receive the episcopal character without op-

[1] FABER, p. 44.

[2] At least this seems to be the meaning of the somewhat obscure language his friend Eddi attributes to him: "O domini venerabiles reges. . . . Sunt hic in Britannia multi episcopi, quorum nullum meum est accusare: quamvis veraciter sciam quod haud quatuordecim anni sunt, ut Britones et Scoti ab illis sint ordinati, quos nec apostolica sedes in communionem recepit, neque eos qui schismaticis consentiunt."—C. 12.

position to the Holy See." He thus confounded together the whole Celtic clergy of Great Britain and Ireland as schismatics, though his apologists have not left us the least trace of any Papal decision which authorised him in taking this attitude. However, the two kings made no objection, but, on the contrary, gave him a numerous train and enough money to present himself to the Franks with the pomp he loved, and which suited the bishop of a great kingdom. He thus crossed the sea and went to Compiègne to seek his friend Agilbert, formerly Bishop of the West Saxons, who had just been made Bishop of Paris. Agilbert received him with all honour as a confessor of the faith. Wilfrid was consecrated with the greatest solemnity, and with the assistance of twelve other bishops. He was carried through the church, in the midst of the crowd, on a golden throne, by the hands of bishops, who chanted hymns, and who were alone admitted to the honour of supporting his throne. He was instituted Bishop, not of Lindisfarne, like his four predecessors, but of York, like Paulinus, the first bishop sent from Canterbury and from Rome, as if by this means to efface all trace of the Celtic mission in Northumbria.[1]

[1] "Tale consilium bene regibus complacuit, præparantes ei navem et auxilia hominum et multitudinem pecuniæ. . . . In sella aurea sedentem more eorum sursum elevarunt, portantes in manibus soli episcopi intra oratoria, nullo alio attingente. . . . Post spatium temporis ad sedem episcopalem Ebracæ civitatis hunc emiserunt."—EDDIUS, l. c. Cf. BEDE, iii. 28; FRIDEGODUS, *Vita Rhythmica*, c. 11.

Shipwreck and combat on the coast of Sussex.

His stay in France was probably too much prolonged, and his return was not without disaster. While he was crossing the Channel, and the clergy who accompanied him, seated on deck, replaced the ordinary songs of the sailors by chanted psalms, a fearful storm arose, by which they were wrecked on the coast of Sussex—the smallest kingdom of the Heptarchy, inhabited, as its name indicates, by the Southern Saxons. The ebbing tide having left the ship aground, the people in the neighbourhood made a rush to avail themselves of that right to wreck and derelict always so dear to maritime populations, and which has been too long maintained even among the most Catholic, as in our own Bretagne. As the Southern Saxons were still pagans, we can scarcely admit, with one of Wilfrid's biographers, that they were excited against him by the malice of Celtic Christianity ; but they did not the less manifest their intention of taking possession of the vessel, and giving the shipwrecked strangers their choice between death and slavery. Wilfrid tried to pacify them, offering all he possessed for the liberty of himself and his followers. But the pagans were excited by one of their priests, who, standing on the cliffs, cursed, like Balaam, the people of God, and looked as if he meant to destroy them by sorcery. One of Wilfrid's followers, armed, like David, with a sling, flung a stone at the heathen pontiff, whose skull it shattered ; and his corpse fell upon the sands. At this

sight the rage of the savages redoubled, and they prepared to take the vessel by storm. Wilfrid's Northumbrians, one hundred and twenty in number, resolved to defend themselves. They swore, according to Saxon custom, not to abandon each other, and to think of no alternative save a glorious death or victory. Wilfrid and his priests, kneeling on the deck, prayed while the others fought. Three times the ferocious wreckers mounted to the assault, and three times they were repulsed. They were preparing for a fourth attack, under the command of their king, who had been attracted by the hope of booty, when the tide suddenly turned, lifted the stranded vessel, and saved the travellers from their enemies. They landed peaceably at Sandwich, on the same Kentish coast where Augustin and his companions had for the first time trodden the coast of England.[1]

Celtic reaction against Wilfrid. King Oswy replaces him by the Irishman Ceadda.

A painful surprise awaited them. During the prolonged absence of Wilfrid the mind of Oswy had changed. The victory of Whitby, like all other victories, was less complete than it at first seemed to be. The Celtic party, apparently destroyed by the unanimous vote of the assembly,

[1] "Canentibus clericis et psallentibus laudem Dei pro celeusmate in choro. . . . Mare navem et homines relinquens . . . littora detergens, in abyssi matricem recessit. . . . Stans princeps sacerdotum idololatriæ coram paganis in tumulo excelso, sicut Balaam . . . ut suis magicis artibus manus eorum alligare nitebatur . . . retrorsum cadavere cadente sicut Goliathus in arenosis locis. . . . Inito pactu, ut nullus ab alio in fugam terga verteret, sed aut mortem cum laude, aut vitam cum triumpho habere mererentur."—EDDIUS, c. 13.

had now revived, and regained its credit with the Bretwalda. The return of Oswy to his former predilections for the Celtic Church, in which he had been baptised and brought up, may probably be ascribed to the influence of the holy Abbess Hilda of Whitby, princess of the Northumbrian blood-royal, to whom the king had confided his daughter when consecrating her to God as the price of his victory over the Mercians and the completed liberation of his country.[1] As long as she lived Hilda remained faithful to the Celtic traditions, and her opposition to Wilfrid never relaxed.[2] It has also been supposed that Oswy had begun to be jealous of his son Alchfrid, and of the influence procured for him with the Roman party by his close alliance with Wilfrid, although it was Oswy himself who had associated his son with him in the royalty, and although his position as Bretwalda or suzerain of the Anglo-Saxon Confederation might have reassured him on that score.[3] But the confidant and biographer of Wilfrid affirms that the Celts (whom he most unjustly styles quartodecimans), with the aid of the devil, persuaded the king to take advantage of the absence

[1] See above, p. 120.

[2] VARIN, account already quoted. WILLIAM OF MALMESBURY, l. c.

[3] FABER, p. 46. A trace of this rivalry between father and son is clearly shown in this passage of Bede:—"Rex Alchfrid misit Wilfridum ad regem Galliarum, qui eum consecrari faceret episcopum. . . . Imitatus industriam filii rex Osviu misit Cantiam, virum sanctum."—iii. 28.

of Wilfrid to appoint one of their party Bishop of York in his place.[1]

Saintly character of Ceadda, the intruded successor of Wilfrid.

It is unanimously allowed that the man whom Oswy substituted for Wilfrid was a saint. His name was Ceadda,[2] a monk of Anglo-Saxon birth, but who had been a disciple of St Aidan. He was a brother of Bishop Cedd or Cedda, who had acted as interpreter at Whitby, and whose death, followed by that of his thirty friends, we have already mentioned. Ceadda had succeeded his brother as Abbot of Lastingham, the monastery which was, after Lindisfarne, the principal seat of the Celtic spirit in Northumbria. It was Oswy's desire, however, that the new bishop should be consecrated, not by the prelates of the Celtic ritual, but at Canterbury by the Saxon metropolitan,[3] who had always preserved a good understanding with the people of the north. But when Ceadda arrived at Canterbury he found that the terrible pestilence of 664 had carried off the archbishop, whose successor was not yet appointed. He then went to the land of the Eastern Saxons to obtain consecration from Wini, of whom we have heard at Whitby and Peterborough, but who also appears

[1] "Oswiu rex, male suadente invidia, hostis antiqui instinctu, alium præarripere inordinate sedem suam edoctus, consensit ab his qui quartadecimanam partem contra apostolicæ sedis regulam sibi elegerunt."—EDDIUS, c. 14.

[2] He is venerated in England under the name of St Chad. "Religiosissimum admirabilem doctorem, de insula Hibernia venientem."—EDDIUS, c. 14. BEDE, iii. 21, 23; iv. 2.

[3] Frithona, also called Deusdedit.

to have been moved by a reactionary impulse against the vote of the Council, since he called to his aid, in the consecration of Ceadda, two British bishops who had remained faithful to the Pascal usage of the Celts.[1] On his return to Northumbria, Ceadda peaceably took possession of his diocese, and displayed there the virtues which have for so long made his name popular among the English. Well versed in Holy Scripture, he drew from it rules of conduct which he never disregarded. His humility, his sincerity, the purity of his life, his love for study, excited the admiration of the Northumbrian people, to whose evangelisation he devoted himself, visiting the cities, villages, and castles, nay, even the most retired hamlets, not on horseback, according to the favourite custom of the Saxons, but on foot, like the apostles, and like his master and predecessor St Aïdan.[2]

It does not appear, however, that Ceadda or any other of the Celtic adversaries of Wilfrid attempted to reverse the decision of the Council of Whitby, or to maintain or re-establish either the Celtic observance of Easter or the tonsure from ear to ear. It is probable that the opposition which arose against Wilfrid, continually increasing in violence, was directed less against Roman doctrines or

[1] "Absumptis in societatem ordinationis duobus de Britonum gente episcopis, qui dominicum paschæ diem . . . secus morem canonicum, a quarta decima usque ad vigesimam lunam celebrant."—BEDE, iii. 28.

[2] "Oppida, rura, casas, vicos, castella propter evangelizandum, non equitando . . . peragrare."—BEDE, iii. 28.

practices than against himself personally. His precocious influence, and still more his violent proceedings against the Irish and their disciples, roused the popular dislike; for it is proved that, wherever he had the power, he allowed the Celts only the choice of giving up their own customs or returning to their native country.[1]

Wilfrid retires to the Monastery of Ripon.

Thus dispossessed of his see, Wilfrid regained all his influence by the moderation and dignity of his conduct. He was only thirty years of age. His youth might have excused some irritation, some warmth easy to be understood in the presence of so manifest an injustice. But far from yielding to this, he displayed the prudence and mature mind of a statesman, together with the humility and charity of a saint. He, so rigid an observer of the canon law, so scrupulous with regard to liturgical irregularities, had here to oppose an inexcusable abuse of power, a direct violation of the laws of the Church—he had to vindicate an evident right, solemnly conferred by the Northumbrian king and nation, and solemnly consecrated by the Church. And yet he preferred to be silent, to withdraw himself, and to trust to the justice of God and of the future. Thus the saint begins to be visible in

[1] "Ipse perplura catholicæ observationis moderamina ecclesiis Anglorum sua doctrina contulit. Unde factum est, ut, crescente per dies institutione catholica, Scotti omnes qui inter Anglos morabantur aut his manus darent, aut suam redirent ad patriam."—BEDE, iii. 28. "Hic primus verum pascha, ejectis Scottis, in Northumbria docuit."—THOM. DE ELMHAM., *Hist. Monast. S. Augustini*, p. 198.

his character; and it must not be forgotten, as an additional claim upon our interest, that the pious usurper of the see was himself already accounted a saint, and placed by public veneration in the high rank which he has for nine hundred years maintained in the regard of English Catholics.

He stays with the Kings of Mercia and Kent.

Wilfrid, whose episcopal character no one could despise, but who had no longer a diocese, retired calmly, and even joyfully, to the Monastery of Ripon, which he held by the generosity of the young King Alchfrid, and there lived in study and seclusion.[1] It may be supposed that his friend Alchfrid went thither to console him—if, indeed, he were living at the time of Wilfrid's return; for from that moment he disappears from history, though there is no record of his death. But Wilfrid was not long permitted to remain in his monastery. Wulphere, King of Mercia, the founder of Peterborough, invited him to his kingdom, where at that time there was no bishop.[2]

Although this kingdom had been converted and governed by Celtic monks, Wulphere was naturally drawn to favour the champion of the Roman ritual, by his marriage with Ermenilda, daughter of the King of Kent, and, consequently, sprung

[1] "Placido vultu et hilari pectore cœnobium suum in Ripon repetiit, ibique cum magna mentis stabilitate."—RICARD. HAGULSTAD., *Hist. Eccles. Hagust.*, c. 6.

[2] Bishop Jaruman had been sent by Wulphere to lead back to the true faith the Eastern Saxons, who, since the great pestilence of 664, had fallen into idolatry. See above, p. 110.

from that race which first received the teachings of Rome from the lips of St Augustin. She was niece of Eanfleda, Queen of Northumbria, who had been the first protectress of Wilfrid, and who had carried back from her exile and education at Canterbury so faithful an attachment to the Roman customs. King Wulphere, Queen Ermenilda, and the Abbot Wilfrid, therefore laboured together to extend and consolidate the Christian faith, in that vast kingdom of Mercia, which already began to rival Northumbria in importance.

St Ermenilda, Queen of Mercia, afterwards Abbess of Ely.

Thanks to the great territorial donations made to him by the king, Wilfrid was able to found several monasteries, in one of which he was destined to end his life. He thus lent powerful aid in achieving the happy results which were chiefly due to Queen Ermenilda. This gentle and noble woman, who, like so many other princesses of the race of Hengist, ended her days in the cloister, and is inscribed in the list of saints, had been chosen by God to complete the transformation into Christians of those terrible Mercians, who, more than all the other Anglo-Saxons, had remained faithful to their national paganism, and had been so long the terror of the new-born Christianity of England. She succeeded as much by her bounties and good example, as by her energetic perseverance. The unwearied activity of her self-devotion was only equalled by her angelic sweetness. She never ceased her exertions until, after a reign of seven-

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teen years with Wulphere, idolatry had completely disappeared from Mercia. Then, on the death of her husband, she entered the monastery, where her mother awaited her, and which had been founded by her aunt.[1]

In order to understand clearly the aspect of these earliest ages of the political and religious history of England, it is needful to remember the ties of blood which united all the kings and princesses of different dynasties who governed the kingdoms of the Heptarchy, and claimed their descent from Odin. This relationship frequently serves to guide us through the maze of incidents which favoured or retarded the preaching of the Gospel. Thus the gentle and noble Ermenilda was the sister of Egbert, King of Kent, who, faithful, like her, to the traditions of his family, always showed himself full of zeal for religion such as Augustin had preached it to his ancestor Ethelbert, and full of affection for Wilfrid. Accordingly, after the death of Augustin's fifth successor, the metropolitan see having remained vacant for some years, Egbert invited the Abbot of Ripon to preside over the spiritual government of his kingdom, and to provide for the ordinations.

Egbert, King of Kent. 664-673.

[1] "Sua dulcedine, blandifluis hortamentis, moribus ac beneficiis indomita mulcens pectora, ad suave Christi jugum rudes populos et indoctos excitabat. . . . Nec requievit invicta, donec idola et ritus dæmoniacos extirparet. . . . *Act SS. Bolland.*, vol. ii. Feb., p. 691. The history of the Monastery of Ely, founded by St Etheldreda, and of which Ermenilda succeeded her mother, Sexburga, as abbess, will be found further on.

Wilfrid exercised this provisional authority for three years; dividing his time between his Northumbrian monastery, and the diocese of Canterbury, where he made many friends, whose aid he secured for the benefit of his Abbey of Ripon. One of his first acts was to bring to Ripon two monks of the monastery of St Augustin, good musicians, who introduced among the Anglo-Saxons the Gregorian chant, always used at Canterbury; and it is to one of these, named Hedd, or Eddi, that we owe the extremely valuable and curious biography of his bishop. With these singers Wilfrid brought also masons, or rather architects, *cæmentarii*, and other artists or workmen, all, no doubt, monks of the same monastery, whose talents he proposed to employ in the great building of which he already dreamed. Finally, he brought from the first sanctuary created by the Benedictines in England, a gift yet more precious and more fruitful than music or architecture, the rule of St Benedict, which no one had hitherto attempted to introduce into the Northumbrian monasteries.[1] Wilfrid constituted himself its ardent and zealous missionary, advancing its adoption side by side with that of the Roman tonsure, the exact observance of Easter, and the harmonious and alternate chanting of the

666-669.

Wilfrid introduces the Gregorian music and the Benedictine rule into Northumbria.

[1] "Cum cantatoribus Ædde et Æona et cæmentariis omnisque pæne artis ministerio in regionem suam revertens cum regula Benedicti, instituta ecclesiarum bene melioravit."—EDDIUS, c. 14. "Nonne ego curavi . . . quomodo vitam monachorum secundum regulam S. Benedicti patris, quam nullus ibi prius invexit, constituerem?"—*Ibid.*, c. 45. Cf. MABILLON, *Act. SS. O. S. B.*, t. v. p. 633, puis *Annales Benedictini*, lib. xv. n. 64.

liturgy. He succeeded thoroughly; for it is to him and to him alone that we must attribute the gradual but rapid substitution of the Benedictine rule for Celtic traditions in the great and numerous communities which the sons of St Columba had created in the north of England. It has been already made apparent in the life of St Columba, that there was no fundamental difference between monastic life as regulated by the great legislator of Monte Cassino, and that practised at Iona and in the other communities of Ireland and Great Britain. The only difference that can be indicated as distinctly characteristic of monastic life among the Celts, is a certain increased austerity in fasts and other mortifications, and a more decided application to the copying of manuscripts.[1] But in the opinion of Wilfrid, as in the general interest of the Church, it was of great consequence that the powerful regular army of Saxon Christianity should march under the same flag, and answer to the same watchword. The watchword and the flag had been brought from Rome by the Benedictine missionaries of Mont-Cœlius, and confided to the two great monastic foundations of Canterbury, from whence Wilfrid brought them to make of them the supreme, and henceforward ineffaceable, characteristics of English ecclesiastical organisation.

[1] As to the election of abbots, which was one of the most essential bases of the Benedictine rule, it appears that Wilfrid himself departed from it without hesitation by naming to his monks the successor they were to give him.—EDDIUS, c. 61.

Choice of a new metropolitan.

However, the aspect of affairs was about to undergo another change. It was needful to find a successor for Archbishop Deusdedit. For this purpose, the King of Northumbria, Oswy, made use of the superior authority in ecclesiastical affairs which seems to have been accorded to the Bretwalda; he showed, at the same time, that though the Celtic party, by appealing to the recollections of his youth, had been able to persuade him to make Wilfrid the victim of an unjust exclusion, he remained, nevertheless, sincerely submissive to the primacy of the Holy See, which he had so solemnly recognised at Whitby. After consulting with the young King Egbert of Kent and the chiefs of the Anglo-Saxon clergy, he appointed a monk of Canterbury, named Wighard, universally known to be worthy of the episcopate, a Saxon by birth, but trained in the school of the first missionaries sent from Rome by St Gregory,[1] and thus uniting all the conditions necessary to satisfy at once the exigencies of the national spirit and those of the most severe orthodoxy. Then, still acting in conjunction with the King of Kent, he did what had never before been done by an English king, nor, indeed, so far as I know, by the king of any newly converted nation; 667.

[1] "Intellexerat enim veraciter quamvis educatus a Scottis, quia Romana esset catholica et apostolica ecclesia. . . . Cum electione et consensu sanctæ ecclesiæ gentis Anglorum. . . . Virum nomine Vigherdum qui a Romanis B. Gregorii papæ discipulis in Cantia fuerat omni ecclesiastica institutione sufficienter edoctus."—BEDE, *Hist. Eccles.*, iii. 29; *Hist. Abbatum in Wiramutha et Girvum*, n. 3.

he sent the archbishop-elect to Rome to be consecrated by the Pope, so that he might be able to ordain perfectly orthodox bishops in all the churches of England.

Referred by King Oswy to the Pope.

Wighard had but just arrived at Rome, when he died there with nearly all his attendants. The two kings then resolved to leave to the Pope the choice of the new metropolitan of England.

But great as was Oswy's zeal and humility in yielding to Roman supremacy, the want of eagerness displayed by Vitalien, who was then Pope, in using the power thus given up to him, was equally remarkable. He replied to Oswy that he had not yet been able to find a person suited for so distant a mission, but promised to make further attempts to find one, and in the mean time congratulated the king on his faith, exhorting him to continue to conform, whether with regard to Easter, or to any other question, to the traditions of the Apostles Peter and Paul, whom God had given to the world as two great lights, to enlighten every day the hearts of the faithful by their doctrine; and exhorted him to complete the work of the conversion and union of the whole island in the same apostolic faith. He sent him, at the same time, some relics of different martyrs, and a cross containing a portion of the chains of St Peter for Queen Eanfleda, the friend of Wilfrid. "Your wife," said the Pope, "is our spiritual daughter; her virtues and good works are our joy, and that of all the Roman Church,

and they bloom before God like the perfumed flowers of spring."[1]

St Theodore, a Greek monk, seventh Archbishop of Canterbury.

After a new and long search the Pope fixed his choice on Adrian, an African by birth, and Abbot of a monastery near Naples, equally versed in ecclesiastical and monastic discipline, and in the knowledge of Greek and Latin. Adrian made no objection either to the distance or to his ignorance of the Anglo-Saxon language, but he declared himself unworthy of the episcopate, and pointed out to the Pope a monk whose age and qualifications accorded better with this difficult mission. This was a monk named Andrew, attached to a nunnery in Italy, and who was judged worthy to be chosen; but his bodily infirmities obliged him to give up the appointment. Then Adrian, again urged by the Pope, proposed to him another of his friends, a Greek monk named Theodore, born, like St Paul, at Tarsus, but then living at Rome, of good life and morals, of a knowledge so profound and various, that he was surnamed the Philosopher,[2] and already of a venerable age, being sixty-six years old. This proposition was accepted by the Pope, but with the

[1] "Hominem docibilem et in omnibus ornatum antistitem, secundum vestrorum scriptorum tenorem, minime valebimus nunc reperire pro longinquitate itineris. . . . Festinet vestra celsitudo, ut optamus totam suam insulam Deo Christo dicare. . . . De cujus pio studio cognoscentes, tantum cuncta sedes apostolica una nobiscum lætatur, quantum ejus pia opera coram Deo fragrant et vernant."

[2] "Sæculari simul et ecclesiastica philosophia præditum virum, et hoc in utraque lingua, græca scilicet et latina."—BEDE, *Hist. Abbatum*, c. 3. Cf. *Hist. Ecclesiast.*, iv. 1.

The Pope joins with him the African Adrian and the Anglo-Saxon Benedict Biscop.

condition that the Abbot Adrian should accompany his friend to England, to watch over his proceedings, that nothing contrary to the orthodox faith might be introduced into the Church, as was too often done by the Greeks. This precaution was justified by the cruel and sanguinary dissensions which then disturbed the Eastern Church, occasioned by the heresy of the Monotheists, and the constant interference of the Byzantine emperors in questions of faith. The matter being thus arranged, Theodore, who had his head entirely shaved, after the custom of the Eastern monks, was obliged to defer his journey for four months, that his hair might grow, before he could receive the crown-shaped tonsure of the West. As soon as his hair had been properly shaved, he was consecrated by the Pope, and started with the Abbot Adrian for England.

26th Mar. 668.

But to the Asiatic and the African, so strangely chosen to rule the Anglo-Saxon Church, and who so well fulfilled their task, the Pope wisely determined to add a third, whose help, especially at the commencement of their mission, would be indispensable to them. This was the young Northumbrian noble, Benedict Biscop, whom we have seen start from England to make his pilgrimage to Rome with Wilfrid, parting from him at Lyons. After his first journey, Benedict returned to England, and gave his countrymen an ecstatic account of all that he had seen at Rome, every recollection of

which he cherished. These recollections drew him a second time to Rome, where, after new studies and new enjoyments, he received the tonsure, and embraced a monastic life at the great sanctuary of Lerins, where Abbot Aygulphe had just introduced the Benedictine rule.[1] After remaining two years in this still venerated isle, he was unable to resist his desire of returning to Rome out of devotion to St Peter. He arrived there for the third time in a trading vessel, and remained until Pope Vitalien commanded him to give up this pilgrimage in order to accomplish a much more meritorious one by returning to his own country as guide and interpreter to the new archbishop.[2] Benedict obeyed ; and seventy years after the mission of St Augustin, the three envoys started for England to take possession of it, as it were, a second time, in the name of the Church of Rome.

The apostolic travellers arrested on their journey by Ebroïn.

But their journey was not without hindrance ; it took them more than a year to go from Rome to Canterbury. Instead of finding in France, as Augustin had done, the generous assistance of a queen like Brunehilde, the new missionaries became

[1] Alliez, *Histoire du Monastère de Lérins*, 1860, vol. i. p. 371. I am glad to mention, in passing, this monograph as one of the best works of our time on monastic history.

[2] "Ad patriam reversus studiosius ea quæ videt ecclesiasticæ vitæ instituta diligere et quibus potuit prædicare non desiit. . . . Non pauca scientiæ salutaris quemadmodum et prius hausta dulcedine. . . . Adveniente nave mercatorio, desiderio satisfecit. . . . Et quia Benedictum sapientem, industrium, religiosum ac nobilem virum fore conspexit (papa) huic . . . cum comitibus suis commendavit episcopum . . . cui pariter interpres existere posset et ductor."—*Hist. Abbatum*, c. 2, 3.

the prey of the tyrant Ebroïn, mayor of the palace, the first of those great statesmen, too numerous in our history, whom posterity has so meanly admired or absolved, and who, to the misfortune of our country, sought the triumph of their personal greatness only in the universal abasement and servitude of others. The presence of these three personages, a Greek, an African, and an Anglo-Saxon, all bearing recommendations from the Pope, appeared suspicious to the all-powerful minister. The Byzantine emperor, Constantine II., at that time still sovereign of Rome, which he had lately visited and pillaged, but where he talked of re-establishing the seat of empire, had excited the anxiety of Ebroïn, who imagined that the Papal messengers might be charged with the management of some plot between the Emperor and the Anglo-Saxon kings against the Frankish kingdom of Neustria and Burgundy, of which he regarded himself as chief. The Abbot Adrian appeared to him the most dangerous, and he therefore detained him a prisoner for two years after the release of the others. Meanwhile, thanks to the direct intervention of King Egbert, the Archbishop Theodore was enabled to reach England, and solemnly take possession of his see. His first act was to confide to his pious companion, Benedict Biscop, the government of that great abbey near Canterbury which contained the sepulchres of the archbishops and kings, and which had been dedicated by St Augustin to St Peter, though it is now

27th May 669.

only known by the name of the Apostle of England. Benedict remained there as superior until the arrival of Adrian, to whom it was transferred by the new archbishop, according to the Pope's commands that the African abbot and the monks who accompanied him should be established in his diocese.[1] 671.

The arrival of St Theodore marks a new era in the history of the Anglo-Saxons.[2]

Pontificate of St Theodore. 669-690.

There must have been, indeed, a stern courage and a holy ambition in this grand old man to induce him, at sixty-seven years of age, to undertake so laborious a task as that of the spiritual government of England. The history of the Church presents few spectacles more imposing and more comforting than that of this Greek of Asia Minor, a countryman of St Paul, a mitred philosopher[3] and almost septuagenarian monk, journeying from the shores of the East to train a young nation of the West—disciplining, calming, and guiding all those discordant elements, the different races, rival dynasties, and new-born forces, whose union was destined to constitute one of the greatest nations of the earth.

He is the first metropolitan recognised by all England.

Thanks to the assistance of the powerful King of Northumbria, the new Archbishop of Canterbury found himself invested, for the first time, with authority recognised by all the Anglo-Saxons. This

[1] BEDE, *Hist. Eccles.*, iv. 1; *Hist. Abbat.*, c. 3.

[2] LINGARD, *Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. i. p. 77.

[3] "Cofamulum et coepiscopum nostrum, magnæ insulæ Brittaniæ archiepiscopum et philosophum."—*Epist.* AGATHONIS *Papæ ad Imp.*, ap. BARONIUM, an. 680.

supremacy, which the intelligent desire of the Bretwalda Oswy for union with Rome enabled him to exercise, was solemnly recognised by Pope Vitalien, who renewed in his favour all the prerogatives conferred by Gregory the Great on Augustin and the see of Canterbury, omitting all mention of the second see which Gregory had wished to establish at York.[1] This supreme authority over all the Churches of Great Britain, whatever their antiquity or origin, had been, in the hands of Augustin and his successors, only a title and a right; in those of the venerable Greek monk, it now became, for the first time, a powerful and incontestable reality.

He re-establishes Wilfrid in the see of York.

The first use which he made of this supremacy was to repair the injustice of which Wilfrid had been the victim. Oswy seems to have made no opposition; he yielded to the apostolic authority, whose decrees Theodore made known to him.[2] He thus crowned his reign by an act of reparation and of repentance, in allowing the man whom he had unjustly expelled[3] to be re-established in the epis-

[1] "Is primus erat in archiepiscopis, cui omnis Anglorum ecclesia manus dare consentiret."—BEDE, iv. 2. Cf. GUILL. MALMESB., *De Gest. Pontif. Angl.*, i. 1. "Nobis visum est te exhortari et in præsente commendare tuæ sagacissimæ sanctitati omnes ecclesias in insulas Britanniæ positas. Omnia ergo quæ a S. Gregorio prædecessore nostro Augustino sincello suo statuta sunt atque firmata vel etiam per sacrum usum pallii concessum, nos tibi in ævum concessimus."—*Diplomo of Pope Vitalien*, in *Act. SS. Bolland.*, t. vi. Septembris, p. 59.

[2] "Veniens ad regem . . . statuta apostolicæ sedis, unde emissus venerat, secum deportans."—EDDIUS, c. 15.

[3] It must be observed that Wilfrid was only bishop, never archbishop, of York. The metropolitan dignity attached by St Gregory to that see disappeared after the flight of Paulinus, and was restored only in 735

copal see of the capital of his kingdom. The humble and pious Ceadda, who, by some strange forgetfulness of duty, had consented to replace Wilfrid, made no opposition to the application of canon law, which deprived him of his usurped see. He said to the archbishop, "If you are certain that my episcopate is not legitimate, I will abdicate it voluntarily; I have never thought myself worthy of it, and only accepted it in obedience." Upon which, as Wilfrid, when dispossessed by him, retired to the Monastery of Ripon, he himself returned to that of Lastingham, founded by his brother, from whence he had been taken to be made bishop. He lived for some time peacefully in this retreat. But the generous Wilfrid, appreciating the virtues of the holy intruder, whose diocese he had continued to inhabit, was determined to bring them back again to the light. The bishopric of the kingdom of Mercia having become vacant, he persuaded his faithful friend Wulphere to summon Ceadda thither, and gave up to him for his residence a place called Lichfield, previously bestowed by the king on Wilfrid, that he might establish an episcopal see there, either for himself or for another.[1] Theodore and Ceadda both

Ceadda, the intruded saint, is made bishop in Mercia by Wilfrid.

to Egbert, known by the letter addressed to him by the venerable Bede, and by many relics of ecclesiastical legislation published in the *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England.*

[1] "Si me nosti episcopatum non rite suscepisse, libenter ab hoc officio discedo: quippe qui neque me unquam hoc esse dignum arbitrabar."—BEDE, iv. 2. "Ille servus Dei verus et mitissimus. . . . Sciebat (Wilfridus) sub Wulfario rege fidelissimo amico suo locum donatum sibi."—

consented to this plan. The only condition made by the archbishop was that the bishop should be consecrated anew, with the assistance of Wilfrid, on account of the irregularity caused by the presence of the two Britons who had assisted at his first consecration.[1] In other respects, Theodore never ceased to do him all the honour which his holy life deserved; and as, from love to his work, and according to the custom of the first Northumbrian bishops of Celtic race, Ceadda persisted in traversing on foot the immense extent of his new diocese, the primate commanded him to use a horse, and himself held the stirrup to oblige the humble bishop to mount.[2] With admirable delicacy, Wilfrid assigned to this innocent usurper the care of continuing the task which had occupied and consoled himself during his disgrace. For three years Ceadda occupied the same position in Mercia which Wilfrid himself had occupied, aiding the noble efforts of the king, and the holy Queen Ermenilda, to destroy the last traces of idolatry. In the intervals of repose left him by his pastoral journeys, he inhabited a little monastery which he had built

EDDIUS, c. 15. Lichfield, erected into a metropolis some time during the eighth century, and still a bishopric, derived its name from the number of bodies of martyrs killed in the reign of Diocletian which have been discovered there—*Leich* or *Lich-field*.

[1] This is the first application of a canon which afterwards became law: "Qui ordinati sunt Scotorum vel Britonnum episcopi, qui in pascha vel tonsuræ catholica non sunt ordinati ecclesiæ, iterum a catholico episcopo manus impositione confirmentur."—Ap. THORPE, p. 307.

[2] "Ipse cum sua manu levavit in equum, quia nimirum sanctum esse virum comperit."—BEDE, iv. 3.

near his cathedral, that he might there continue his life of prayer and study with seven or eight monks, his friends. It was here that he died, leaving behind him a noble example of humility, wisdom, fervour, and voluntary poverty. The narrative of his last days was transmitted by the monk who attended him to the venerable Bede, always so scrupulous in indicating the sources from which he drew the materials for his religious history of the English nation. "My father," said a disciple to the dying bishop, "dare I ask you a question?" "Ask what thou wilt." "I conjure you to tell me what are those sounds of celestial harmony which just now we heard, and which sometimes descend from heaven, and sometimes return thither; are they not the ineffable strains of angels?" "Thou hast then heard and recognised the voice from on high which must not be spoken of before my death. Yes; it is they. The angels are come to call me to that heaven which I have always loved and desired; they have promised to return in seven days to take me with them." And when the day of deliverance and recompense arrived, the witness of this happy death saw not only heaven open and the angels appearing; he seemed to see also the brother of the dying man, his inseparable companion in former days, and, like him, a bishop and monk, descending from the opening heaven to seek the soul of Ceadda and conduct it to eternal happiness. Many details of this nature, floating on the

His death. 2d March 672.

bosom of an ocean of forgotten ages and races, show us how, among these rude converts, so rapidly transformed into austere monks and saints, natural affection preserved all its empire, and mingled, in sweet and holy union, with the grandeur and beauty of their supernatural vocation.[1]

The Asiatic Theodore and the African Adrian make a visitation of England.

Having thus regulated or re-arranged the government of souls in the two largest kingdoms of the Saxon confederation, Northumbria and Mercia, the venerable archbishop pursued, with an activity in no way relaxed by age, the task which the Holy See had assigned him. He successively traversed all the provinces of the island already occupied by Anglo-Saxons. With the aid of the former bishops, and of those whom he ordained wherever they were wanting, he applied himself, in all the kingdoms, to pacify the sanguinary feuds of princes and nobles, to re-establish canonical order and ecclesiastical discipline, to correct abuses, to spread good morals, and to regulate, according to Roman custom, the celebration of Easter.[2] He is believed to have originated on this occasion that ecclesiastical

[1] "Vocem suavissimam cantantium atque lætantium de cœlo ad terras usque descendere. . . . Obsecro ut dicas quod erat canticum illud lætantium. . . . Revera angelorum fuere spiritus qui me ad cœlestia, quæ semper amabam ac desiderabam, præmia vocare venerunt. . . . Scio hominem in hac insula adhuc in carne manentem qui . . . vidit animam Ceddi fratris ipsius cum agmine angelorum descendere de cœlo, et assumpta secum anima ejus, ad cœlestia regna redire."—BEDE, vi. 3. This brother was Bishop Cedd, who had acted as interpreter at Whitby.

[2] "Peragrata insula tota. . . . Libentissime ab omnibus suscipiebatur atque audiebatur . . . per omnia comitante et co-operante Adriano. . . . Gratiosi ad pacificandum invicem inimicos."—BEDE, iv. 2.

law which commanded all fathers of families to repeat daily, and to teach to their children, the Lord's Prayer and the Creed in the vulgar tongue.[1]

Abbot Adrian accompanied him everywhere, and seconded him in all things. These two aged monks, one Asian and the other African, were received, listened to, and obeyed by the Anglo-Saxons with that affectionate deference which in Christian hearts triumphs so easily over the prejudices and opposition of a narrow nationality. They repaid the popular attachment by their unwearied zeal for the souls and hearts of the people, preaching to them evangelical truth, with that intelligent and practical solicitude which makes true apostles.

Ecclesiastical legislation of Theodore. *Liber Pœnitentialis.*

The authentic monuments of their zeal are all preserved in the imposing collection of moral and penal institutes known as the *Liber Pœnitentialis* of Archbishop Theodore,[2] which has served as the model of so many other analogous collections. It is there apparent that if great excesses and shameful disorders had already appeared among the new Christians of England, these were kept in check by all the resources of spiritual fatherhood and priestly vigilance. It is surprising to find among these

[1] Hook, i. 152. I have not been able to find this rule among the Acts of Theodore, but it is several times repeated in the *Monumenta Ecclesiastica* of the following century. See Thorpe, *passim.*

[2] The most complete version is found in the great collection of Thorpe, *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England.* Cf. Hook, op. cit., vol. i. p. 169.

Germanic populations the traces of refined corruption mingled with the brutal vices of barbarians; but the art and authority which could inflict for every sin, even when confessed and pardoned, a penalty either public or secret, according to the circumstances, is all the more admirable. The punishments are generally of excessive severity, induced, it would seem, by the rudeness of barbarous manners, on which it was necessary first to act by means of intimidation. No doubt they were soon practically evaded by the equivalents of alms and other good works. At the same time, in this code set forth by a Greek prelate sent from Rome, there appears no trace of Roman or Byzantine law. On the contrary, it embodies the entire penal system of the Germanic laws, founded on the principle which required a punishment for every offence, or a compensation for every punishment.[1] And as it is always pleasant to find a loving and tender heart among the masters and teachers of the people, it is delightful to read, at the end of one of the most ancient manuscripts of this formidable code, a few lines, in which the archbishop thus commends his work and his soul to a prelate, one of his friends: "I beseech thee, noble and pious bishop, to pour out at the feet of God the abundance of thy prayers for Theodore, the poor stranger whom thou lovest.[2]

[1] See some curious details in ELMHAM, p. 206, on the foundation of a monastery due to the application of this system of compensation.

[2] "Te nam, sancte speculator,
Verbi Dei digne dator,

In the course of this apostolic journey, Theodore naturally visited Lindisfarne, as well as the chief seats of the other dioceses. The metropolis of Celtic resistance was obliged to acknowledge the authority of the Roman metropolitan, who imprinted upon it the seal of subordination and union by dedicating, under the name and in honour of St Peter, the monastic cathedral of the Celtic bishops which Bishop Aïdan had commenced to build, in the Scottish mode, and entirely in wood, many years before.[1]

He organises the parochial system.

It is to these pastoral visits of Archbishop Theodore that all agree in tracing back the commencement of parochial organisation,—above all, in the south of England. Until then, the monasteries had been almost the only permanent centres of faith and religious instruction. The bishops issued from their monasteries to preach and to baptise; they were constantly wayfaring.[2] The monks,

Pontificum ditum decor,
Hæddi, pie presul, precor,
Pro me tuo peregrino
Preces funde Theodoro."

This was addressed to Hedda, Bishop of the West Saxons at Winchester in 676, much praised by Bede, v. 18. A distinction must be made between the singer Hedd or Eddi, biographer of Wilfrid; Bishop Hedda, his contemporary and colleague at Winchester; Bishop Ceadda, who supplanted him at York; and Bishop Cedd, brother of Ceadda. The narrator condemned to open a way through this forest of obscure names, so easily confounded, and so subject to infinite alteration from the pens of more recent annalists, may well claim the sympathy of his readers.

[1] Bede, iii. 25.

[2] "Longe lateque omnia pervagatus." This is the eulogy which falls perpetually from the pen of Bede.

especially those of the Celtic monasteries, traversed the country, stopping at different stations previously indicated to administer the sacraments, just as is now done in lands under the charge of missionaries, and in certain districts of Ireland.[1] But churches, regularly served by monks or secular priests, were speedily built on the continually increasing estates of the great abbeys and monastic cathedrals. The kings and nobles obtained from bishops and abbots the right of choosing in the monastery, or among the cathedral clergy, some priests who might, for the good of their souls, accompany them on their expeditions, or live with them in their rural residences. Theodore availed himself of this custom to lay the foundations of a parochial system, by persuading the princes and great proprietors to build churches on their domains, and to attach to them a resident priest, with an endowment in land or in fixed rents; in return for which they should have the right of choosing their priests. From this right has grown the system of church patronage, such as it now subsists in England, with the special impost, not yet abolished, called church-rate, levied on all the proprietors of a parish for the keeping of the church in repair: so true is it that everything bears the trace of solidity and permanence in the country which twelve centuries ago was constituted as a nation by that union of the Church with the Anglo-Saxon race, of which Italian and Greek monks

[1] See above, pages 23 to 27, the first missions in Northumbria.

such as Theodore and Augustin were the plenipotentiaries.[1] Nearly all the present names of counties date from this epoch. All the dioceses of that time exist still; everything has remained so unchanged, that a map of the country in the tenth century might serve for to-day; while there remains not one single trace of the ancient territorial divisions of France and Germany.

Theodore is anxious to increase the number of dioceses.

After having thus laid the foundation of parishes, it was Theodore's desire to proceed to a new episcopal division. Hitherto, except in Kent, each kingdom of the Heptarchy had formed a diocese, each king choosing to have one bishop of his own, and only one. Northumbria, long divided into two kingdoms, had never formed more than one diocese, of which the seat was sometimes in the ancient Roman metropolis of York, sometimes in the sacred isle of Lindisfarne; and this diocese, even after a partial division, remained so vast that the venerable Bede mentions a large number of districts which had never yet been visited by their bishop.

The extreme inequality of extent and population in the different Saxon kingdoms, which a single

[1] "Hic excitavit fidelium voluntatem ut in civitatibus et villis ecclesias fabricarentur, parochias distinguerent, et assensus regios his procuravit; ut si qui sufficientes essent super proprium fundum construere ecclesias earumdem perpetuo patronato gauderent; si inter limites alterius alicujus dominii ecclesias facerent, ejusdem fundi domini notarentur pro patronis."—THOS. DE ELMHAM, *Hist. Monast. S. Augustini*, p. 289; HOOK, i. 159. Cf. LAPPENBERG, p. 190; KEMBLE, c. 9; and, above all, LINGARD, *Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. i. p. 156-197. The secular priests placed in these parishes took afterwards the name of mass-priests.

glance at the map will make apparent, had thus led to a similar difference between the dioceses; those of the north and the centre being far too large for the administration of one man. But Theodore here met with the resistance which is almost always produced in similar cases. He convoked a council at Hertford in the fourth year of his pontificate, the first ever held in the Anglo-Saxon Church; but was obliged to adjourn his proposition, as he himself relates in the official report of the deliberations of this assembly, dictated by himself to his notary.[1] At the same time, he reserved to himself the means of returning to the charge by decreeing that the national council should meet once a-year at a place called Cloveshoe, according to Saxon fashion, in the open air. He was happier, however, in the two canons regarding monasteries which he proposed, and which were unanimously adopted by the bishops and numerous abbots attached to the Roman ritual who composed the council.[2] Of these canons, naturally marked by the Benedictine spirit, since the greater part of the bishops in the council were sons of St Benedict,

Council of Hertford. 24th Sept. 673.

[1] "Nonum capitulum in commune tractatum est, ut plures episcopi, crescente numero fidelium, augerentur: sed de hac ad præsens siluimus." —BEDE, iv. 5. This notary Titillo, whose presence is proved by Theodore and Bede, seems to us to answer the objection raised by Kemble to the authenticity of Ethelbert's donation to Augustin on account of the mention of a referendary in that document.

[2] "Concilium episcoporum, una cum eis qui canonice patrum statuta et deligerent et nossent, magistris ecclesiæ pluribus."—BEDE, iv. 5. Of the eight bishops then in England, five assisted in person at the council, and Wilfrid was represented there by his envoys.

the first forbade bishops to disturb monasteries in any way, or to despoil them of their goods; the second forbade monks to pass from one monastery to another without the permission of the abbot. This was a consecration of the vow of *stability*, which, though often neglected, was not the less an essential distinction of the order of St Benedict from the great monastic communities of the East or of Celtic countries.[1]

The literary progress of the English monasteries due to Theodore and Adrian.

The monasteries having been thus placed under the most imposing safeguard by the Greek metropolitan of England, there yet remained for him, as well as for his African assistant, Adrian, an intellectual and literary development as worthy of the admiration as of the gratitude of posterity. Both were profoundly attached to and imbued with, not only ecclesiastical knowledge, but secular learning, that double intellectual current of which the middle ages never ceased to give examples. Theodore had brought with him a copy of Homer, which he read perpetually, and which was long preserved and admired by his ecclesiastical descendants.[2] They

[1] "*Tertium.* Ut quæque monasteria Deo consecrata sunt, nulli episcoporum liceat ea in aliquo inquietare, nec quicquam de eorum rebus violenter abstrahere. *Quartum.* Ut ipsi monachi non migrent de loco ad locum, hoc est, de monasterio ad monasterium, nisi per demissionem proprii abbatis, sed in ea permaneant obedientia quam tempore suæ conversionis promiserunt."—BEDE, iv. 5. That Theodore did not intend to permit the monasteries to absorb all religious life, to the detriment of the secular clergy, is proved by this article of the *pœnitentialis:* "Nec libertas monasterii est pœnitentiam sæcularibus judicare, quia proprie clericorum est."—THORPE, p. 307.

[2] GODWIN, *De Præsulibus Angliæ*, p. 41.

gathered round them, in the monasteries where they lived or which they visited, a crowd of young and ardent disciples, whom they led daily to the fountain of knowledge. While explaining Holy Scripture to them with particular care, they taught their scholars also ecclesiastical astronomy and arithmetic, which served to establish the Pascal computation, and afterwards the art of composing Latin verses. But it was chiefly the study of the two classic tongues which flourished under their care. These became so general that, sixty years after, there were still monks trained in the school of Adrian and Theodore who spoke Greek and Latin as readily as Anglo-Saxon. At the same time, music and chanting, hitherto cultivated only in the monasteries of Canterbury and by the deacon James at York, spread all over England.[1] Monasteries thus transformed into schools and homes of scientific study could not but spread a taste and respect for intellectual life, not only among the clergy, but also among their lay-protectors, the friends and neighbours of each community. Under the powerful impulse given to it by the two Roman monks, England became almost as important a literary centre as Ireland or Italy.[2]

[1] "Literis sacris simul et sæcularibus abundanter ambo instructi, congregata discipulorum caterva, scientiæ salutaris quotidie fluminia irrigandis eorum cordibus emanabant. . . . Sed et sonos cantandi in ecclesia. . . . Ab hoc tempore per omnes Anglorum ecclesias discere cœperunt."—BEDE, iv. 2.

[2] HOOK, t. i. p. 165. MIGNET, *Mémoire sur la Conversion de l'Allemagne par les Moines*, p. 25.

While recalling this peaceful and luminous period of which Theodore and Adrian were the stars, the enthusiasm of the venerable Bede breaks out into a kind of dithyramb: "Never," he says, "since the Anglo-Saxons landed in Britain, had more happy days been known. We had Christian kings, at whose bravery the barbarous nations trembled. All hearts were inflamed by the hope of those celestial joys which had just been preached to them; and whosoever wished to be instructed in sacred learning found the masters that he needed close at hand."[1]

Let us add, to characterise with more precision this pontificate of Theodore, that he was the last foreign missionary called to occupy the metropolitan dignity in England, and that the Greek monk succeeded, as has been justly remarked, in transforming into an indigenous and national establishment, into a public and social institution, that which had hitherto been only a missionary church. This transformation could only have been made by that special and supreme authority with which, at the demand of the Anglo-Saxons themselves, the Oriental archbishop had been invested by the Holy See, and the result was to give to the popes a whole nation as a lever for their future action both upon nations already Christian and upon those which still remained to be converted.

[1] "Neque unquam prorsus feliciora fuere tempora . . . dum omnium vota ad nuper audita cœlestis regni gaudia penderent."—BEDE, iv. 2.

CHAPTER III.

BEGINNING OF THE TRIALS OF WILFRID: ST ETHELDREDA.—669-678.

Wilfrid, reduced to a subordinate position, reconciles himself to King Oswy, who dies after a prosperous reign of twenty-eight years.—Extension of Northumbrian domination, and of Wilfrid's jurisdiction towards the north.—At the commencement of the new reign, alliance between him and King Egfrid, who triumphs both in the insurrection of the Picts and the invasion of the Mercians.—Episcopal virtues and austerities of Wilfrid.—His confirmation journeys; the child resuscitated.—Wilfrid's monasteries become centres of public education.—Services which he renders to the arts; music, spread of the Gregorian chant.—Great architectural works at York, at Ripon, and especially at Hexham, where he builds the finest church on this side the Alps on land given by Queen Etheldreda.—Connection of Wilfrid with Etheldreda, the first and most popular of English female saints.—Her origin and connections.—Twice married, she succeeds in consecrating her virginity to God.—Wilfrid encourages her in her resistance to King Egfrid, and gives her the veil at Coldingham; Egfrid pursues her.—She flies to Ely.—Legends of her journey.—Foundation and monastic life at Ely.—The major-domo Owen.—Wilfrid continues to advise Etheldreda.—His quarrel with Egfrid provoked by the new queen, Ermenburge.—The Archbishop Theodore interferes in their disputes.—He deposes Wilfrid, and divides his diocese into three new bishoprics, which he confides to Celtic monks.—Wilfrid appeals to Rome.—The saints and great abbots of his country remain indifferent or hostile.—Strange ignorance of ecclesiastical right, even among the saints.

Wilfrid reduced to a subordinate position.

WHILE the Archbishop Theodore received everywhere the credit of the intellectual and moral prosperity of England, Wilfrid, re-established in his

see, but eclipsed by the popularity and authority of the primate, appears to have been thrown back into a subordinate position. Nevertheless it was he who had given the first signal for this renewal of Roman influence in England, who had gained the decisive battle of Whitby, who had begun, supported, and decided the struggle against the insular spirit and its exclusive tendencies, and who, in more than one trial, had paid the price of his spontaneous devotion. And it was a stranger from the depths of Asia Minor who came to reap what he had sown, while not one special mark of pontifical approbation or gratitude had honoured the first author and most intrepid champion of this happy revolution. In contemplating the triumphs of Theodore, there only remained for him to say, like the precursor of our Saviour, "He must increase, but I must decrease," and to prove the disinterestedness and sincerity of his soul, by lending all the assistance possible to his venerable rival.

Wilfrid reconciled to King Oswy.

This he did by sending deputies to the council of Hertford. Enough occupation besides remained to him in dividing his life between the duties of the episcopate and those of his monastic profession. Reduced to a secondary rank, he could yet find ample satisfaction for his zeal for the good of souls and of the Church, above all, since his reconciliation with Oswy. This reconciliation was complete, and accompanied by such an adhesion to the opinions of Wilfrid on the part of the Bretwalda, that, having

fallen ill, he conceived the project of going, if he recovered—he, the first of Saxon kings—to pass the remainder of his life near the tombs of St Peter and St Paul at Rome. He implored Wilfrid to accompany him, promising him new gifts to keep up that pomp and magnificence of worship which was so dear to the bishop. But the death of Oswy put a stop to this project. He died at the age of fifty-eight, after a reign of twenty-eight years, which had been signalised by the deliverance of his country, and by the overthrow of the pagan domination of the Mercians, and which, had it not been stained by the murder of the pious Oswin, would have been the most glorious and happy in the Saxon annals. He was buried at Whitby, in the great maritime monastery to which he had given his daughter as the price of his decisive victory over the pagans. This daughter, Elfleda, on becoming abbess ten years after the death of her father, claimed his remains, and placed them beside those of her maternal grandfather Edwin, the first Christian king among the northern English, so that the two greatest princes of the two rival Northumbrian dynasties reposed together in this monastic necropolis.[1]

Who dies. 15th Feb. 670.

Supremacy of Oswy in the North.

This famous Oswy, last and greatest Bretwalda of whom history keeps any record, had established

[1] "In hoc monasterio et ipsa et pater ipsius Oswi et pater matris ejus Edwinus et multi alii nobiles in ecclesia S. Petri sepulti sunt."—BEDE, iii. 24.

in the north of his kingdom a supremacy still more extensive in some respects, and more durable, than in the south. Passing the frontiers which his predecessors Edwin and Oswald had given to Northumbria on the Caledonian side, he subjugated all the territory between the Forth and the Tay.[1] But it was chiefly in the east of the central peninsula, in those districts which have since received the names of Lothian and the Marches, that he impressed on the institutions, manners, and language, that Anglo-Saxon character which, throughout the history of Scotland, remains so visibly distinct from the manners and traditions of Caledonia. Hence arose that partition of Scotland during the whole of its independent existence between two influences, or rather between two races, nominally ruled by the same kings, but distinct by language, laws, cultivation, and all the habits of life, and almost always at bitter feud with each other.[2]

Extension of the diocese of Wilfrid.

Oswy's victories over the race which had formerly sheltered his youth and exile extended, out of all proportion, the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Northumbria, which had been originally established at Lindisfarne in the centre of the kingdom, but which, since the restoration of Wilfrid, had been fixed at York, much further south. The crosier of Wilfrid thus extended not only over

[1] "Perdomuit . . . gentem Pictorum maxima ex parte regno Anglorum subjecit."—BEDE, iii. 24.

[2] AUGUSTIN THIERRY, *Dix Ans d'Etudes Historiques*, p. 166.

the two primitive kingdoms of Bernicia and Deira, but also over three provinces inhabited by the vanquished races, the Picts of Lothian, the Britons of Cumberland, and the mingled population of Britons, Scots, and Picts in Galloway.[1]. His spiritual authority was recognised, at least nominally, by all the Celtic races, and it cannot be doubted that he used all his efforts to root out from among them, as from among the Northumbrians, the customs of their fathers. This also was, no doubt, one of the causes of that flood of resistance and discontent which was to sweep him away in the end.

His union with the new King Egfrid.

Oswy was replaced on the Northumbrian throne by his son Egfrid. During the first years of the new reign, the concord between the king and the bishop was complete. The Picts, however, imagined that the youth of Egfrid would furnish them with an opportunity of regaining all that his father had taken from them. A general insurrection took place, seconded by all the auxiliaries which could be provided by the unconquered tribes of Caledonia.

Victories over the insurgent Picts. 670.

But Egfrid, a worthy successor of the valiant kings Oswy and Oswald, put himself at the head of a troop of cavalry, surprised his enemies, and exterminated them. We are not told whether religion had any part in this war, but it is plain that all the desires of Wilfrid were for the triumph

[1] "Wilfrido administrante episcopatum, nec non et omnium Northymbrorum, sed et Pictorum, quousque rex Oswin imperium protendere poterat."—BEDE, iv. 3. Cf. VARIN, memoir already quoted.

of the Northumbrians by the language of his friend Eddi, who speaks of the Picts as brutes (though they were already Christians), describes as *bestial* their hatred of the Saxon yoke, and rejoices that two rivers were so choked with their corpses that it was almost possible to cross dryshod to attack the survivors and bring them again under the detested yoke which fifteen years later they succeeded in throwing off for ever.[1]

Wilfrid must have been more embarrassed when Wulphere, his old and faithful friend, the protector of his disgrace, the husband of the gentle Ermenilda, too faithful to the traditions of his father Penda, tried in his turn to destroy the young Egfrid, and to render Northumbria again tributary to Mercia. But he soon decided for his hereditary chief, and joined his exhortations, in the name of the men of God, to those addressed by the Northumbrian Parliament to the king, to excite him to a most vigorous resistance, in which they triumphed.[2] Thus it was not Northumbria, but Mercia, which became tributary. Egfrid even seized a whole province to increase his kingdom, already so vast, and never allowed the Mercians to regain their independence

And over the Mercians.

[1] "Tenero adhuc regno, populi bestiales Pictorum feroci animo subjectionem Saxonum despiciebant. . . . Statim equitatu exercito præparato . . . stragem immensam populi subruit, duo flumina cadaveribus mortuorum replens, ita . . . ut supra siccis pedibus ambulantes, fugientium turbas occidentes persequebantur, et in servitutem redacti populi . . . subjecti jugo captivitatis jacebant."—EDDIUS, c. 18.

[2] "Rex vero, consilio senum patriam custodire, ecclesias Dei defendere episcopo docente, in Deo confisus."—*Ibid.*, c. 19.

till after the accession of Ethelred, brother of Wulphere, who had married the sister of the victor.[1]

Egfrid and Wilfrid were now both victorious: one over the enemies who had menaced his kingdom in the north and south; the other over the dissidents who occupied so large a portion of his diocese. During several years of a very temporary alliance, which was destined to end in the most bitter enmity, they combined all the power of their double authority to strengthen the edifice of Northumbrian royalty, and the just supremacy of Roman customs, over the vanquished Celts and the tributary Mercians. The young king showed great deference to the already celebrated prelate who had been the friend of his elder brother. Harvests of unusual abundance seemed to the people a pledge of celestial protection; and, as in the other parts of England, the harmony of the priesthood and royalty, under the auspices of a great bishop, seemed about to bring in an era of general peace and prosperity.[2]

Episcopal virtues of Wilfrid.

The power of Wilfrid was used only for the good of souls, commencing with his own. He was surpassed by no one in those works of piety and mortification which the numerous temporal cares that oppressed him rendered yet more dear and yet

[1] BEDE, iv. 12. See the genealogical tables A and C.

[2] "Wilfrido episcopo ad austrum super Saxones, ad aquilonem super Britones et Scotos, Pictosque regnum ecclesiarum multiplicabatur. . . . Rex et regina simul Wilfrido obedientes facti, pax et gaudium in populis, anni frugiferi."—EDDIUS, c. 20, 18.

more necessary. His nights passed in prayer, his days in studying the Holy Scriptures, perhaps edified and surprised his visitors and daily companions less than his fasts and abstinence. Saxon intemperance was confounded by the example of this powerful personage, the first in the country, except the king, who never permitted himself to drink more than the contents of a small phial, even when he was most exhausted, and after a long journey on foot under a burning sun. As to purity of body and soul, he believed that he preserved it by washing from head to foot in cold but consecrated water every night, summer and winter; and he preserved this habit—borrowed, perhaps unconsciously, from the austerities of Celtic monachism[1] —until he was forbidden to continue it by the Pope, on account of his age.[2]

His zeal for good was tempered, at this time at least, by great moderation. We are told expressly in considering this epoch of his life, that he had made himself dear to all the different races of his immense diocese, from the Humber to the Clyde. He multiplied, as much as possible, the priests and deacons necessary for the new parishes, which were everywhere formed ; but he reserved to himself the

[1] See vol. iii. p. 258.

[2] "In conviviis tam abstinenter vivebat, ut numquam solus, quamvis parvissima phiala esset, potu consumpsisset, aut pro calore sitiens, aut. . . . In vigiliis et orationibus, in lectione et jejuniis quis similis ei? . . . Corpus in aqua benedicta nocturnis horis inclementer æstate ac hieme consuetudinarie lavavit."—EDDIUS, c. 20.

His journeys for confirmation.

principal part in the fatigues and obligations of an apostolic ministry. He travelled, sometimes on foot, sometimes on horseback, in all weathers and all seasons, through his great province, to baptise, to preach even in the smallest hamlets, and, above all, to administer the rite of confirmation. Everywhere eager crowds pursued him and surrounded him, to obtain the benefit of the sacraments from his hands.[1] It was in one of these journeys that an incident occurred, at the village of Tiddafrey, which ought to be recorded here. While the ceremony of confirmation was going on, a poor mother, agonised by the loss of her first-born, made her way, weeping, through the crowd, with the little body of her child clasped to her heart. Having reached the first rank among the mothers, who pressed forward with their children, she presented her dead son to the bishop among the living, as if to be confirmed with them. Wilfrid, leaning over the child, perceived that it was dead. Then, comprehending how it was, he paused beside the desolate mother, and watched her a while in silence; upon which she threw herself at his feet, covering them with tears and kisses, and with a voice broken by sobs, adjured him to give her back her child. "Oh, holy man," she cried, "beware how you destroy the faith of a desperate

[1] "Omnibus gentibus charus et amabilis. . . . Inter sæculares undas fluctuantes moderate novas ecclesias gubernabat. . . . Equitante et pergente ad varia officia episcopatus sui."—EDDIUS, c. 20, 17.

woman! Help me to believe; restore my child to life, and baptise it. To God and to you it is still living. Courage! fear not to do it in the strength of Christ!" Wilfrid remembered the Canaanite of the Gospel. He knelt in prayer. Then placing his right hand on the heart of the child, he felt that it beat, and so restored it to life. After having thus raised it up, and baptised it, he returned it to the mother, exacting a promise that at seven years old she should bring it to him to be trained as a servant of God.[1] This miracle may or may not be believed; but who can refuse to be touched by the cry of the mother? and it is pleasant to find in Wilfrid that goodness of heart which God sometimes gives to great disputants and stern champions, and which alone renders them completely irresistible.

The child restored to life.

Let us add, to return to the dark reality of earthly things, that the mother, once in possession of her child, would not give him up, but fled with him to the Britons[2]—that is to say, to the enemies of the saint, probably in Cumbria, which was also in the diocese of Wilfrid, and from whence it was necessary for an officer of the bishop to bring the child back by force to his benefactor. He after-

[1] "Amaro animo susurrans, mœrore et onere fatigata . . . habens primogenitum mortuum sub sinu pannis involutum. . . . Coram facie agnoscentis cecidit in terram . . . adjuravit eum audaciter . . . pedes deosculabatur, lacrymis irrigavit, . . . 'O sanctissime, noli orbatæ mulieris fidem extinguere, sed credulitatem meam adjuva: suscita eum et baptiza; tibi enim et Deo vivit: in virtute Christi ne dubites.'"—EDDIUS, c. 17.

[2] "Latentem sub allis Britonum," Eddi says.

wards became a monk at Ripon, where he was called the bishop's son.

The monasteries of Wilfrid become centres of public education.

It is not easy to understand how Wilfrid should have needed unwilling recruits to fill his monasteries, when the number of monks who thronged to them is one of the best established facts in his history. Besides, the Northumbrian monasteries, like others, were schools, and many of the children received there enrolled themselves among their masters. Some important details in the life of our saint prove that the education given in monasteries was a true public education, and fitted youths for the world as well as for the cloister. It is expressly said that the Anglo-Saxons of high rank, the earls and thanes, were eager to confide their children to Wilfrid, to be brought up in his monastic establishments; and that at the end of their education they chose between the service of God and that of the king. If they decided on a secular and military life, Wilfrid sent them to the king fully armed, as he himself at fourteen years of age had appeared before Queen Eanfleda.[1]

Services rendered by Wilfrid to the arts. Music.

During all the course of his laborious episcopate, Wilfrid was moved, by the love of God and the love of souls, to make great efforts for the consecration, to the service of the Church, of those inexhaustible treasures of art which at that time found refuge alone in the monastic order. Music,

[1] "Principes et sæculares viri nobiles filios suos ad erudiendum sibi dederunt, ut aut Deo servirent, si eligerent, aut adultos, si maluissent, regi armatos commendaret."—EDDIUS, c. 20.

above all, appeared to him an indispensable auxiliary of the new faith. He was not content with establishing within his monasteries a course of musical instruction, the teachers of which he had brought from the great school of Gregorian song at Canterbury; but with the help of Stephen Eddi, who has left us the story of his life, he spread this instruction through all the churches of the north of England. Thanks to him, the Anglo-Saxon peasants mingled with their labours as well as with their prayers the sweet and solemn chanting of psalms in the Gregorian tones.[1] Thanks to him, Northumbria become a great centre of music, rivalling the school of Canterbury, in which the priests and the faithful renewed their musical education periodically, as at the fountainhead—a fact which must have associated the noble memory of Wilfrid with the solemn and consoling modulations of a popular and traditional liturgy.

His great architectural labours,

But ecclesiastical architecture offered him a still wider field; and the results obtained by his exertions roused his contemporaries to an en-

[1] FABER, p. 62, 66. "Sed et sonos cantandi in ecclesia, quos eatenus in Cantia tantum noverant, ab hoc tempore per omnes Anglorum ecclesias discere cœperunt . . . primusque magister Nortanhymbrorum ecclesiis Æddi . . . invitatus de Cantia."—BEDE, iv. 3. There is a second curious passage regarding other companions of Wilfrid: "Cantatorem quoque egregium, vocabulo Maban, qui a successoribus discipulorum B. papæ Gregorii in Cantia fuerat cantandi sonos edoctus, ad se suosque instituendos accersiit, ac per annos duodecim tenuit: quatenus et quæ illi non noverant, carmina ecclesiastica doceret: et ea quæ quondam cognita longo usu vel negligentia inveterare cœperunt, hujus doctrina priscum renovarentur in statum. Nam et ipse episcopus Acca cantator erat peritissimus."—BEDE, v. 19.

thusiasm the echo of which has descended to us. Born with a taste for art and building, and also with a decided love of pomp and magnificence, he devoted all these natural dispositions to the service of God.[1] At the head of the monkish *cæmentarii*, whom he had brought from Canterbury, he began by thoroughly repairing the primitive Cathedral of York, which had been founded by Paulinus, the first Roman missionary, and where Edwin, the first Christian king, with his daughter Eanfleda, had been baptised. Since the translation of the bishopric to Lindisfarne, this church had been like a place abandoned. The rain entered on all sides, and birds built their nests in it. Wilfrid, like a prudent architect, began his work by covering the roof with lead; he then put transparent glass in the windows; and finally caused the stones injured by damp to be washed and scraped. It seems even possible that he may have been the inventor of that white-washing which has since been so greatly abused;[2] after which he provided the restored cathedral with rich ornaments and a territorial endowment.

At the Cathedral of York;

But he was much more prodigal towards his beloved Monastery of Ripon, which he held by the gift of his first friend Alchfrid, and which

At his old Monastery of Ripon;

[1] "Crescebat ergo cum sæculari sumptu . . . pontifici nostro, amico sponsi æternalis, magis ac magis ardentissimus amor sponsæ."

[2] "Culmina corrupta tecti renovans, artificiose plumbo puro detegens, per fenestras introitum avium et imbrium vitro prohibuit; per quod tamen intro lumen radiabat Parietes lavans, secundum prophetam super lucem dealbavit."—EDDIUS, c. 15. "Ipse illas alba calce dealbavit."—GUILL. MALMESB., *De Gest. Pontif. Angl.*, l. iii. f. 148.

had been the first centre of his independent and missionary action. He built there a vast basilica, dedicated to St Peter, which excited universal amazement. Nothing had ever been seen equal to its lofty porches and columns of polished stone, nor, above all, to its magnificent Book of the Gospels, covered with plates of gold set with precious stones, which Wilfrid, for the good of his soul, had caused to be transcribed in letters of gold on purple vellum, and which he placed on the altar the day that the church was dedicated. On the day of this ceremony, in presence of King Egfrid, his brother, the neighbouring abbots, the ealdormen,[1] the earls, lords, and other principal Saxons, Wilfrid, standing before the altar, turned towards the people who filled the church, and solemnly declared his right to all the lands and churches, enumerating them by name, which had been conceded to him by the kings, with consent of the bishops and assembly of nobles of the country, and which were situated principally in that district which the British clergy had abandoned when flying before the swords of the Saxons. Thus his hostility against the Celtic Christians reappeared, even in the midst of this joyful solemnity, which ended in true

[1] This is the title then given to the greatest Saxon lords, earls, or governors, more or less hereditary, of provinces, — from hence the modern word alderman. The ealdorman is translated in the Latin works of the time by the word *dux*, and his functions were similar to those of the lord-lieutenant of each English county, or of the supreme courts of the kingdom of Hungary, the constitution of which so faithfully reproduced most of the English institutions.

Saxon fashion with a grand banquet, where the Abbot of Ripon entertained all the guests, and which lasted three days and three nights.[1]

At the new Abbey of Hexham.

The magnificence displayed by Wilfrid at Ripon was yet again surpassed in an entirely new foundation at Hexham, situated much further north, in the heart of Bernicia, not far from the place where the sainted King Oswald had planted, for the first time, the cross on the soil of Northumbria, and commenced that struggle which had secured the greatness and independence of his country. It was there — near to the blood-stained cradle of Northumbrian Christianity, at the foot of the lofty wall built as a defence against the Picts by the Emperor Severus, a little below the junction of the two branches of the Tyne, on a plain surrounded by undulating hills—that Wilfrid chose the site of a great monastery, destined, though he little suspected it, to be his own last asylum.[2] As he had dedicated his first abbey to St Peter, he dedicated this to St Andrew, the patron of the church in which he had first prayed on arriving at Rome,

[1] "Basilicam polito lapide a fundamentis in terris usque ad summum ædificatam variis columnis et porticibus suffultum. . . . Inauditum erat sæculis nostris miraculum. . . . Invitatis regibus, cum abbatibus præfectisque et subregulis totiusque dignitatis personæ. . . . Coram regibus enumerans regiones quas ante reges . . . et in illa die cum consensu et subscriptione episcoporum et omnium principum, illi dederunt. . . . Consummato sermone, magnum convivium trium dierum eo noctium . . . lætificantes inierunt."—EDDIUS, c. 27.

[2] This site is perfectly described in a recent publication of the Surtees Society, which contains a complete history of Hexham—*The Priory of Hexham, its Chroniclers, Endowments, and Annals,* by JAMES RAINE. Durham, 1864.

and from whence the first apostles of England had been sent. The surprise and admiration which his previous works had awakened became indescribable at the sight of the deep foundations dug, and immense stones placed in them for the basement of a church which, when finished—with its porches and pillars, its numerous naves and clerestories, its vast vaults underneath, its spiral staircases and galleries, and the imposing height of its spires—was regarded for two centuries as the most beautiful on this side the Alps, and as a kind of reproduction of Roman ambition.[1]

The monk mason fallen from the summit of the building.

From the pinnacle of one of these towers, which was of unheard-of height, a young monk upon one

[1] "Cujus profunditatem in terra cum domibus (?) mirifice politis lapidibus fundatam, et super terram multiplicem domum . . . variis linearum anfractibus viarum, aliquando sursum, aliquando deorsum, per cochleas circumductam, non est meæ parvitatis explicare . . . neque ullam domum aliam citra Alpes montes, talem ædificatam audivimus." —Eddius, c. 21. "Ibi ædificia minaci altitudine murorum, erecta . . . multa proprio sed et cæmentariorum, quos ex Roma munificentiæ attraxerat, magisterio . . . nunc qui Roma veniunt allegant ut qui Hagulstadensem fabricam vident, ambitionem Romanam se imaginari jurent."—Guillelm. Malmesb., *De Gest. Pontif.*, l. iii. f. 155. The successor of Wilfrid collected here a crowd of relics placed in shrines. Each triforium, formed by the intercolumniation of the edifice, was occupied by one of these shrines. This wonderful church, with all its riches, was burnt by the Danes in 875. Nothing now remains but the crypt, of which a plan, extremely curious and complicated, will be found in the excellent *Introduction to the Study of Gothic Architecture*, by Mr J. H. Parker, p. 11. This crypt is now covered by the beautiful Abbey Church, rebuilt in the twelfth century, the choir and transept of which have preserved their original beauty, the nave having been destroyed by the Scots in 1296. Those among my readers who are interested in architecture will forgive an old archæologist for presenting to their notice the text of Richard, Prior of Hexham, who wrote about 1150, and who had seen the ruins of Wilfrid's church. It will be found in the appendix to this volume, No. III.

occasion fell to the ground, breaking his arms and legs on the pavement. The rest believed him dead, and were about to carry him away in a coffin, when Wilfrid, in tears, stopped the bearers, collected the whole community, and said to them:—"Pray all of you to God, with lively faith, that He would grant us the grace which He gave to St Paul, that He would restore this child to life, and that the enemy may not have such occasion to rejoice in our work." The general prayer was granted. The medical members of the community bound up the broken limbs of the young monk, who recovered slowly, and lived long. This incident proves that Wilfrid himself directed the works, and that the monks of the monastery mingled with the *cæmentarii* by profession whom Wilfrid had brought from Canterbury, or even attracted from Rome by the offer of large salaries.[1]

A hundred years later, an illustrious Northumbrian monk, who has been adopted by France and received into the number of her distinguished men, the great Alcuin, begged the sons of Wilfrid to reckon him among the number of their familiar friends, referring at the same time to the admiration excited, even beyond the seas, by the mag-

[1] "Cum ædificarent cæmentarii murorum altitudines, quidam juvenis de pinna enormis proceritatis elapsus ad terram . . . ultima spiramina trahens jacebat. . . . Pontificis lacrymantis moratione . . . spiritum vitæ recepit et alligantes medici ossa confracta de die in diem melioratus est."—EDDIUS, c. 22. See preceding note in respect to the Roman workmen.

nificent dwelling left to them by their founder. "Oh, noble posterity of saints," he wrote to them, "heirs of their honours and of their spotless life, inhabitants of that dwelling so marvellous in beauty, walk in the footsteps of your fathers, so that, passing from the splendour of your earthly home, you may be worthy, by the grace of God, to rejoin those from whom you are descended in the kingdom of eternal beauty."[1]

Connection of Wilfrid with Queen Etheldreda.

The land on which the new Monastery of Hexham was built had been given to Bishop Wilfrid, not by the king, but by the queen, Etheldreda, whose personal estate it was, a part of her dowry.[2] It was the residence he preferred to all others, as much on account of the calm which he enjoyed there as from his tender affection for the giver.[3] It is now time to turn to this saint, whose life was so singular, whose influence over the destiny of Wilfrid was so marked, and in whom we must re-

[1] "Ædilberto episcopo et omni congregationi in ecclesia sancti Andreæ Deo serventium, Alchuinus vestræ clientellus caritatis in Christo salutem . . . O nobilissima sanctorum progenies patrum! illorum honoris venerabilisque vitæ successores et pulcherrimorum habitatores locorum vestrorum, sequimini vestigia patrum: ut de his pulcherrimis habitationibus ad eorum, qui vos genuerunt, æternæ beatitudinis consortium, in cælestis regni pulchritudinem, Deo donante, pervenire mereamini."—ALCUINI *Opera*, ed. Froben. 1777, t. i. p. 196.

[2] RAINE, p. xiv. This territory, known by the name of Hexhamshire, was twelve miles long and three broad.

[3] "Præ ceteris quibus præfuit ecclesiis, hanc creberius visitavit, devotius coluit."—ÆLRED, *De Sanctis Eccles. Hagustaldensis*, c. 1. "Tum ob amorem dilectissimæ dominæ suæ, tum propter secretiorem et quietiorem vitam."—RICARD. HAGUSTALD., *De Ant. et Moderno Statu ejusdem Ecclesiæ*, c. 2.

cognise the earliest, and for a long time the most popular, of all the English female saints.[1]

Etheldreda no doubt, like all the princes and princesses of the Anglo-Saxon dynasties, believed herself descended from Odin; but at least she was undoubtedly of the family of the Uffings, the royal race in East Anglia. Her father, King Anna, married a Northumbrian princess, sister of the Abbess Hilda, and grandniece of Edwin, first Christian king of Northumbria. It was to avenge the death of this father, who had fallen under the sword of the sanguinary Penda, that King Oswy, her father-in-law, made war on the Mercians, and not only delivered East Anglia, but also conquered and occupied Mercia. Etheldreda was the sister of Ermenilda, Queen of the Mercians, who had so well seconded Wilfrid in the work of converting her people.[2] She had also another sister, married to that King of Kent who was so zealous for the destruction of idols.[3] And she was niece, through her mother, of Hilda, the holy and powerful Abbess of Whitby, whose authority, though no doubt weakened since the victory gained by Wilfrid over her friends at Whitby itself, was, notwithstanding, always great throughout Northumbria.

[1] Under the name of St Audrey. This name, now quite fallen into disuse, is given by Shakespeare to one of his characters in *As You Like It*.

[2] See above, p. 191.

[3] See p. 104. Cf. BEDE, iv. 22; and THOMAS, *Historia Eliensis*, i. 2, 25, ap. ACT. SS. O. S. B. sec. ii. A new edition of this historian is published by Stewart, London, 1848.

Like all princesses whose history has fallen into the region of legends, the chroniclers boast of her precocious piety, the fervour and stainless purity of her early years. Nevertheless, she loved ornament; and on her deathbed still remembered the weight of the necklaces and jewels with which her delicate throat had been loaded.[1] These ornaments gave additional brilliancy to her great beauty, which excited, it is said, the passion of all the neighbouring princes.[2] The most ardent of these, the Prince of the Gyrwiens, a Saxon colony established in the marshy country which separates East Anglia from Mercia, asked her in marriage, and obtained her from her father, two years before the death of that king on the field of battle.[3] Etheldreda, however, having resolved to follow the example of the blessed Virgin Mary, and to consecrate herself wholly to God, resisted to the utmost the will of her father, and succeeded in preventing the consummation of her marriage during the three years that she passed with the tender and generous

652.

[1] "Merito in collo pondus languoris porto, in quo juvenculam me memini supervacua monilium pondera portare."—BEDE, iv. 19.

[2] "Ab ipsis infantiæ rudimentis sobrietati et pudicitiæ indulgens. . . . Accedunt plurimi formæ virginis excellentiam admirantes. . . . Innumeris ejus pulchritudo principibus complacebat: et venusta faciei ejus pulchritudo ad puellares promovebat amplexus."—THOM., *Eliens.*, § 4.

[3] "Postulatur a Tomberto principe . . . qui in amorem virginis totum animum informandum instituit. . . . Alligatur licet invita conjugali copulæ. . . . Desponsata matrem Domini meruit imitari. . . . In quorum copula non commixtione carnis unum corpus, sed, ut creditur, in Christo unus erat animus. . . . Ignara maritalis negotii, indefessis precibus apud Deum obtinuit, ut illam custodiret immaculatam."—*Ibid.*

Tombert. He died; and the young widow supposed herself for ever delivered from the matrimonial yoke, and free to give herself up to Christ. But it was not so. Egfrid, the son and heir of the great King of Northumbria, the most powerful prince of the Anglo-Saxon nation, became in his turn enamoured of her. Her resistance was as vain as in the first instance. The entreaties of her uncle, who had succeeded her father as King of East Anglia, and those of all her relations, compelled her to a second marriage, which no doubt seemed to them a new and precious pledge of alliance be-
659. tween the two kingdoms.[1] The impassioned Egfrid bestowed on her, in full sovereignty, considerable possessions, of which the vast territory of Hexham, which she afterwards gave to Wilfrid, formed part.

When Wilfrid became bishop, he acquired at once, as has been seen, a great influence over the king, and the queen was not slow to show him still greater confidence and affection.[2] But what must have been the surprise and irritation of the young king, whom the powerful testimony of his contemporary Bede represents to us as very pious and highly beloved by God,[3] when he found that Ethel-

[1] "Gaudebat solutam se esse in Christi libertate de jugo conjugii. . . . Ægfridus . . . inflammatur in amorem virginis, opes confert innumeras, dotesque spondet multiplices. . . . Principis petitio vehementius facta est . . . licet invita . . . adquievit unanimi parentum voluntati."—THOM., *Eliens.*, c. 4, 8.

[2] See above, p. 219. "Quem virgo regina præ omnibus in regno dilectum et electum habuerat."—*Id.*, c. 15.

[3] *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 24.

dreda persisted, as in her former marriage, in keeping her virginity for God! Like the terrible Clotaire, the husband of St Radegonde, a century previous, he found that he had married not a woman, but a nun.[1] But although he loved not less than Clotaire the wife who refused to belong to him, he respected and feared her more. She seemed to him more his lady and mistress than his equal and queen. Several years thus passed; the refusals of Etheldreda serving only to increase his passion. He then determined to apply to Wilfrid, well knowing what was the empire of the bishop over the conscience of Etheldreda, as well as over her heart, since he was the man for whom she had the greatest affection.[2] He offered him, as Wilfrid himself related to the venerable Bede, large estates and much money as the price of the queen's consent to his wishes. Bede only sees in Wilfrid on this occasion a witness to the incorruptible virginity of the saint. But, if we are to believe the official panegyrist of Etheldreda, it was Wilfrid who encouraged her in her resistance, while at first pretending to second the views of the king, in order to preserve his favour. In his secret conferences with her, he showed her heaven as the reward of her

[1] "Dicebat se habere jugalem monacham, non reginam."

[2] "Acriores Ægfrido stimulos adjicit, et ad copulam virginis feroces illius animos vehementer incendit . . . (sed) reginam impudice non tetigit, neque constristavit . . . quoniam non ut reginam aut parem, verum tanquam dominam per omnia venerabatur. . . . Tamen optat ille debitum a conjuge."—THOM., *Eliens.*, t. i. 8, 9.

perseverance. She made to him the vow of chastity, and he then counselled her to ask from the king a formal separation, that she might consecrate herself to God in a monastery. Egfrid at first refused this absolutely; but after long disputes — after twelve years of so strange and stormy a union, vanquished by the prayers and tears of her whom he ever loved with so faithful a passion—he suffered a kind of consent to be torn from him to the departure of his unconquerable wife.[1]

[1] Respect for truth obliges me to give entire the text on which this singular history rests. In the first place that of the contemporary Bede, whose curiosity, at first incredulous, may be remarked; next that of the monk of Ely, who did not write until five centuries after the death of Etheldreda, but who lived in the monastery which she had founded, and surrounded with all the memorials which she had herself brought and left there, and which had passed from mouth to mouth until his time. "Data est regi præfato cujus consortio cum duodecim annis uteretur, perpetuæ tamen mansit virginitatis integritate gloriosa; sicut mihimet sciscitanti cum hoc an ita esset, quibusdam venisset in dubium beatæ memoriæ Wilfrid episcopus referebat; dicens se testem integritatis ejus esse certissimum: adeo ut Ægfridus promiserit se ei terras ac pecunias multas esse donaturum, si reginæ posset persuadere ejus uti connubio, quia sciebat illam nullum virorum plus illo diligere."—BEDE, iv. 19. "Vidit ejus assiduam cum beato præsule familiaritatem. . . . Hinc Dei præconem rex frustra fatigat præmiis. . . . Wilfridus voti virginei fautor existens, vigilantis animi sagacitate procurabat, ne qua femineæ mentis inconstantia virgo mutaret. . . . Dissimulavit provide, tanquam regi favens et desiderii sui efficaciam reginæ persuadendam pollicens; veritus ne, sicut contigit, ob rem hujusce modi offensum illum haberet. . . . Sic Dei virtute prædita, per consilium sancti præsulis nullatenus regi assensum præbuit; egitque vir beatus sua industria ut potius divortium quæreret. . . . Princeps, nec facile adquiescit graviterque dolendum se asserit, si aliquando contingat a conjuge dilecta ferre divortium, licet ei nunquam conjunctus esset more conjugatorum. Postulat iterum regina, fletibus et diutinis postulationibus tanto importunius insistit. . . . Rex tandem victus ipsius importunis precibus, licet invitus, tamen eam dimisit invincibilem."—THOM., *Eliens.*, i. 9, 10. Let us add, finally, that Eddi, the disciple of Wilfrid, maintains a prudent and complete silence as to the intervention of his master in this delicate affair.

She was no sooner furnished with this tardy and painful acquiescence in her wishes, than she hastened to Coldingham, to the great seaside monastery governed by Ebba, aunt of the king, and sister of his predecessors Oswald and Oswy. Wilfrid very soon followed, to give her the veil and black robe, which should henceforward prove her new position as a nun.[1] Soon after, however, Egfrid followed her to her retreat; unable to endure her absence and the sacrifice she had imposed on him, he came with the furious determination of reclaiming her, and asserting his rights. The Abbess Ebba saw that she could not resist the violence of her nephew; she advised the queen, therefore, to flee. Etheldreda accordingly left Coldingham on foot, disguised in the dress of a poor woman, and accompanied by two brave nuns of the monastery. It did not occur to her to seek an asylum at Whitby, though the Abbess Hilda was her aunt. She must have known too well that that holy princess would encourage no enterprise in which Wilfrid had a share. She turned southward, through a thousand difficulties and adventures, towards the river which separated Northumbria from the rest of England, and having happily crossed that stream, she paused on the confines of her own country, East Anglia, in an estate which her first husband had given to her as her jointure.[2]

Wilfrid gives her the veil at Coldingham.

671. Egfrid pursues her.

She flees to Ely.

[1] "Accepto velamine sanctimonialis a Wilfrido."—BEDE, l. c.

[2] "In veste humili . . . latitando incessit. . . . Per innumera itinerum

Legends of the journey.

This long and fatiguing journey of the queen, disguised, and flying from her husband to bury herself in a cloister, touched deeply the imagination of the English people; and miraculous stories founded on it passed from mouth to mouth for ages, while they were also commemorated in the sculptured capitals and painted glass of the great monastic churches.[1] Pious pilgrimages were made to the promontory washed by the sea, on which, in the first stage of her journey, pursued by Egfrid, she took refuge with her companions, and round which the tide rose so high as to render it inaccessible for seven consecutive days, until the king, discouraged, abandoned the pursuit.[2] And the pilgrims pointed out to each other the spot where, travelling on foot on a day of great heat, she fell asleep from fatigue on the open plain. Its position was marked by a majestic ash, the

discrimina et labores diversos . . . ut possessionem propriam, quam a Tomberto primo sponso ejus, jure dotis . . . perpetuo possidendam acceperat."—THOM., *Eliens.*, c. 15. This author continually appeals to the traditional evidences by which he was inspired: "Hoc in Beda nequaquam invenimus, sed pro cunctorum usque nunc testimonio scribendum existimavimus. . . . Quicumque locum Coludi norunt, cum assertione hujus rei testes existunt. . . . Quæ ex priorum attestatione comperi, atque scriptura teste nosse contigit. . . . Res seniorum nostrorum relatione nobis tradita, quam omnis provincia in qua acciderat velut hesternum recitare solet et meminit."—C. 9, 11, 12, 13.

[1] For example, on the capitals of the beautiful Cathedral of Ely, in 1342.

[2] "Mare suum alveum egrediens . . . locum, in quem sacræ virgines ascenderant, circumdedit, et sicut ab incolis loci accepimus, per septem continuos dies eas occuluit . . . solitos recursus obliviscens, quamdiu rex illic aut penes locum mirabatur."—*Ibid.*, c. 11. This rocky cape is still called, as in the time of Thomas, Colbert's Head.

largest tree in the district, which was believed to have been the travelling staff which the royal traveller had thrust into the ground while she slept, and which she found at her waking already covered with verdure; an emblem of the great monastery in the shade of which she was destined to pass the rest of her days, and to shelter, among many others, her friend and protector Wilfrid.[1]

Establishment and monastic life at Ely.

The lands she possessed in right of her first husband were very extensive, since they supported nearly six hundred families. Their position was almost that of an island, surrounded by fens, which could only be crossed in boats. This island was called Ely, or the Isle of Eels.[2] It is a name to be found on every page of the political and religious history of England.[3] Ethel- 673. dreda built a monastery there, which grew into speedy greatness, and where many Anglo-Saxon virgins joined her, among whom were a number of princesses of her family, having at their head her sister, the Queen of Kent. Mothers confided their daughters to her to educate. Even men, and among them many priests, selected her

[1] "De somno evigilata . . . invenit baculum itineris sui . . . jam viridi amicta cortice fronduisse . . . facta est fraxinus maxima . . . quam ex nostris adhuc plures viderunt."—*Ibid.*, c. 13. This place was called, in Anglo-Saxon, *Ædeldrethestowe*, Etheldreda's Rest.

[2] "A copia anguillarum quæ in iisdem paludibus capiuntur."—BEDE, c. 1.

[3] After having been destroyed by the Danes, Ely became an abbey of monks, and was erected into a bishopric in 1108. Its cathedral, of which we shall speak later, is one of the marvels of Anglo-Norman architecture.

also for their guide and mistress in the spiritual life. Many of the officials of her household followed her example when she quitted the throne and the world to devote herself to God. The chief of these officials, who may be regarded as the queen's major-domo, was an East Anglian lord, named Owin, a man of faith and of amiable disposition, who had been attached to her from her cradle, had accompanied her from East Anglia to Northumbria, and had no desire to remain in the world after her and without her. He abandoned his honours and possessions, and, putting on a poor man's dress, went with a mattock and axe on his shoulder, and knocked at the door of the monastery where Abbot Ceadda lived, at Lichfield in Mercia. "I come here," he said, "to seek, not rest, as some do, but work. I am not worth much for meditation or study, but I will do as much manual labour as you like; and while the bishop reads in his cell I will take care of the work outside."[1] Others of her servants joined Etheldreda at Ely, where she soon found herself at

Her major-domo, Owin.

[1] "Ovini monachus magni meriti et pura intentione . . . eratque primus ministrorum et princeps domus ejus. . . . Securim atque asciam in manu ferens. . . . Non ad otium, ut quidam, sed ad laborem."—BEDE, iv. 3. Cf. BOLLAND., *die* 4 *Martii.* This Owin is the monk who attended Bishop Ceadda in his last moments. See above, p. 205. He himself is reckoned among the saints, and the Bollandists have consecrated an article to him in their volume i. of March. Bede relates the story of another of Etheldreda's officers—her cupbearer—who, after having been made a prisoner, and sold as a slave in the market at London to a Frisian, was bought back by the King of Kent, nephew of Etheldreda.

the head of one of those double communities of men and women, or rather of brethren and sisters, which played so important a part in history at the epoch of which we are speaking.[1]

She gave them, during the seven years she passed at their head, an example of all monastic virtues, and especially of zeal in fasting and prayer. Few details exist of this period of her existence, but the holiness of that life must have left deep traces in the memory of Anglo-Saxon Christians to have enabled it to triumph over time and human forgetfulness beyond that of any other woman of the race. Among her austerities, the greatest wonder was that so great a lady should wear nothing but woollen instead of linen garments, and that she took a bath only on the four great feasts of the year, and even then, after the rest of the community.[2]

Wilfrid never gave up his care of Etheldreda. As soon as he knew of her arrival at Ely he hastened thither.[3] It was he who instituted her abbess, who gave the veil to her nuns, and who regulated all that concerned the government and interests, temporal or spiritual, of the new community. He paid her frequent visits, and never ceased to give consolation and enlightenment to

Wilfrid continues to direct her.

[1] Thom., *Eliens.*, c. 15, 18, 22, and 23.

[2] Bede, iv. 19.

[3] "Beatæ virginis non immemor, nec se a vicissitudine dilectionis illius excludens, ut eam in Ely descendisse cognoverat, festinus advolat."—Thom., c. 16. Cf. 15 and 19. "A quo ipsa plurimum regendi consilium et vitæ solatium habuit."

her for whom he must have felt more than ever responsible, since he had encouraged her to sacrifice the obligations of conjugal life to follow the path of supernatural virtue.

However touching and dramatic this history may be, it appears happily certain that no one in the Catholic Church would now authorise or approve the conduct of Wilfrid. It is not less certain that no one of his own time seems to have blamed him. Without any desire of judging him severely, it is evident that these events had no fortunate influence upon him. His life, hitherto agitated, but glorious and prosperous, became, after the consecration of Etheldreda, nothing but a tissue of trials and tempests. First of all, the intimate and fruitful union which had existed between him and the king of his country, was broken beyond remedy. Egfrid never pardoned him for his deceit, for having interfered in his domestic life, only to destroy its charm, and for having used his influence to encourage the wife whom he loved to desert him; and he long nourished his resentment in silence, waiting and preparing for the day when he might despoil him of his episcopal see.[1]

Rupture between Wilfrid and Egfrid;

[1] "Nec deinceps confessorem Domini Wilfridum a secretis seu affectis ut antea coluit, sed iram diu tacito contra illum sub pectore gessit; et expectata hora, ob istius modi causam, eum de sede sui episcopatus expulit."—THOM., *Eliens.*, l. i. c. 11. Bede, the contemporary of Wilfrid, and who had questioned him with regard to the story of Etheldreda (iv. 19), simply mentions the rupture without alluding to its motives; he shows otherwise in all that regards the conflicts of Wilfrid with kings and bishops a singular reserve, very rare with him.

But the direct instrument of the rupture between them and of the disasters of Wilfrid, was the second wife of Egfrid, she who, thanks to Wilfrid, and to him alone, had taken the place of St Etheldreda on the throne, and in the heart of the sovereign of Northumbria. This princess, Ermenburga, was a sister-in-law of the King of the West Saxons. It was she, if we may believe the companion and biographer of Wilfrid, by whom the perfidious enemy of the Christian flock chose to work, according to his custom of employing the weakness of women to corrupt the human race.

Provoked especially by the new queen, Ermenburga.

This wicked Jezebel, continues our ardent musician, drew from her quiver the most poisoned arrows to pierce the heart of the king, and to provoke him to a furious envy of the great bishop. With the eloquence of hatred she represented to him the shameless pomp and luxury displayed on every occasion by the Bishop of York; his immense riches, his services of gold and silver, the increasing number of his monasteries, the vast grandeur of his buildings, his innumerable army of dependants and vassals, better armed and better clothed perhaps than those of the king. She pointed out to him besides how many abbots and abbesses either gave up to him during their lives the government of their communities, or solemnly constituted him their heir; so that the moment might be foreseen when all those estates, given by the generosity of the Northumbrians to the sanctuaries of the new

religion, would become the appanage of one man.[1] Such arguments could not but aggravate the resentment of a heart wounded by the desertion of a wife passionately regretted, and to whom another wife pointed out the way of vengeance.

Archbishop Theodore takes part with them.

The husband and wife thus decided upon the destruction of Wilfrid; but not daring to attack him directly, they had the art to engage the Archbishop Theodore in their plans, and to strike their enemy, the great champion of Rome, by the hand of the direct and supreme representative of Roman authority in England. Eddi distinctly accuses the primate of having been bribed by the King and Queen of Northumbria.[2] It is repugnant to our minds to admit such an accusation against a saint placed in the Roman calendar side by side with St Wilfrid. We can more easily believe that the archbishop suffered himself to be led away by an apprehension of

[1] "Consueta arma arripiens, vasa fragilia muliebria quæsivit. . . . De pharetra sua venenatas sagittas venefica in cor regis, quasi impiissima Jezabel, per auditum verborum emisit, enumerans ei eloquenter . . . innumerumque sodalium exercitum regalibus vestimentis et armis ornatum. . . . Namque pæne omnes abbates et abbatissæ cœnobiorum, aut sub suo nomine secum substantias custodientes, aut post obitum suum hæredem illum habere optantes voto voverunt."—EDDIUS, c. 23, 20. "Quod aureis et argenteis vasis sibi ministrari faceret."—GUILL. MALMESB., f. 148.

[2] "Ad auxilium suæ vesaniæ archiepiscopum Theodorum cum muneribus, quæ excæcant etiam sapientium oculos . . . invitaverunt. Venientes vero ad eos quid mente agerent in contemptu ejus patefacientes, et sine aliquo culpandi piaculo inique damnare consensit."—EDDIUS, c. 23. William of Malmesbury, in the twelfth century, repeats this account. The Bollandists do not admit that Theodore was corrupted, but do not hesitate to accuse him of culpable connivance with the enemies of Wilfrid. —*Act. SS.*, vol. vi. Sept., p. 62.

the too great power of Wilfrid, and above all, by a perfectly legitimate desire to put in execution his project for augmenting and better dividing the English dioceses. It is also almost certain that he allowed himself to be influenced by a kind of Celtic reaction, the movers of which did not attempt to return to anti-Roman usages, but only to punish in Wilfrid the destroyer of their ancient ritual and their recent conqueror.

He deposes Wilfrid, and divides his diocese into three. 678.

Accordingly, during one of Wilfrid's numerous absences, Theodore came to York, and using, or abusing, the supremacy with which the Pope had invested him, he deposed Wilfrid, and also divided the diocese of York or Northumbria into three new dioceses. Nothing could be more significant of the spirit which animated him than his choice of bishops for these new dioceses, who were all monks taken from the ancient Celtic monasteries, who, while recognising Roman customs, had still repelled the Roman bishop.[1] One of these new sees naturally remained at York; there the archbishop placed Bosa, since venerated as a saint, whom he found in the community of Whitby,[2] and consequently of the school of the Abbess Hilda, always so hostile to Wilfrid. By a refinement of animosity, the capital of the second diocese was placed at Hexham, precisely in that great mon-

[1] "Tres episcopos aliunde inventos, et non de subjectis illius parochiæ . . . inordinate solus ordinavit."—EDDIUS, c. 23.

[2] BEDE, iv. 12, 23. Bosa is honoured (November 2) in the English martyrology.

astery which Wilfrid had created with such magnificence. The bishop placed there was the abbot of the Celtic novitiate of Melrose, that very Eata who had been superior of the Scottish community, formerly displaced from Ripon to make room for Wilfrid.[1] The third diocese, which comprehended that part of Mercia recently conquered by the Northumbrian king, was also confided to a Celtic monk, who had been the companion of Ceadda when he replaced Wilfrid after his first deposition by Oswy.[2] Finally, as if to add a touch of derision to violence, a fourth diocese was carved out, according to several authors, in the vast territories of Northumbria, having for its chief seat Lindisfarne, the sanctuary and asylum of the Celtic spirit. This miserable relic of his extinct greatness it was proposed to leave to Wilfrid, thus taking care to place him in the midst of his adversaries.[3]

[1] See above, p. 146.

[2] BEDE, iii. 28, iv. 12. This monk was named Eadhæd. He was afterwards placed by Theodore at Ripon, in order to neutralise the influence of Wilfrid in his earliest foundation.

[3] It appears more probable, according to Bede, that this diocese of Lindisfarne was not created, or rather renewed, until 681; but, supposing it to have been in 678, it is certain that Wilfrid did not then accept the government, as he did some years later. We must not, like Fleury, confound this diocese of Lindisfarne, situated in Bernicia, north of Northumbria, with that of Lindisfari, created by Theodore, and which comprehended the province of Lindsey (now Lincolnshire), a division of Mercia. In 681, Theodore finished his work, and created—quite to the north of the country conquered by the Anglo-Saxons, on the banks of the Forth—a last diocese, which he placed in the Monastery of Abercorn, and which was to comprise all the Picts subject to Northumbrian rule. The land to the north of the Humber was thus divided into five dioceses—York, Ripon, Hexham, Lindisfarne, and Abercorn; the twelve dioceses subject to the metropolis of York, of which Gregory had prescribed the founda-

All these measures bore the unmistakable mark of a Celtic reaction ; but the archbishop gave as his reason that the diocese was large enough to give occupation to four bishops, and that its revenues furnished sufficient support for three instead of ministering to the luxury of one.[1]

Wilfrid appeals to Rome.

At the first report of this attempt on the rights of the Church and his own, Wilfrid hurried home, and summoned the king and the archbishop publicly to explain their motives for having thus despoiled him not only of his ecclesiastical authority, but also of the lands which he held as the gift of the reigning king, his father, and brother. "It is," he said to them, "mere robbery." The two potentates simply replied, "We have no crime with which to reproach you, but we will not change any part of the judgment we have delivered." "Then," replied Wilfrid, "I appeal to the judgment of the Holy See."[2] It was the first time that an appeal to Rome had been heard of in England ; but Wilfrid recalled St Paul's "I appeal unto Cæsar." The step he thus took was a prelude to those great appeals and

tion to Augustin, still lay far in the future. But Theodore did not intend to create in the north a rival metropolis to his own. On the other hand, he multiplied dioceses south of the Humber ; he divided the immense diocese of Mercia into six—*Lichfield*, Leicester, *Hereford*, *Worcester*, Sydnacester, and Dorchester, since transferred to *Lincoln*. Of these six, the four whose names are in italics still exist.

[1] "Prætendebat causam justitiæ ut inde tres alerentur episcopi, unde unus tumebat."—GUILL. MALMESB., f. 149.

[2] "Interrogans quid causæ esset, ut . . . prædonum more defraudarent. . . . Illi responderunt famosum verbum dicentes coram omni populo : Nullam criminis culpam in aliquo nocendi tibi adscribimus ; sed tamen statuta de te judicia non mutabimus."

solemn struggles which, after the Norman Conquest, stirred all the West, and gave so much celebrity to the pontificates of St Anselm and St Thomas of Canterbury.

As he passed out of the royal assembly where he had thus signified his refusal to obey, he turned towards certain flatterers of the prince who were enjoying and laughing at his disgrace. "On this day next year," he said to them, "you who now laugh at my expense shall weep bitterly at your own." And in fact next year, on the very same day, all the people of York were tearing their hair and their garments in token of mourning, as the funeral procession of the young brother and heir of Egfrid passed through their city. This young prince, who was scarcely eighteen years of age, and already dear to the Anglo-Saxons, had been the guest of Wilfrid at the solemn dedication of Ripon: he perished in a war against the Mercians, the beginning of a series of defeats which lasted during all the remainder of the hitherto prosperous reign of Egfrid.[1]

All the saints and chief abbots of his country are hostile or indifferent to him.

The cowardly animosity of these courtiers against the haughty and intrepid prelate is, however, much less surprising than the fact that, incontestably, Wilfrid met with no aid and no sympathy among the great and holy churchmen who were his contemporaries. Not only did the illustrious Abbess

[1] "Adulatoribus dixit: Hoc anniversario die, qui nunc ridetis in meam pro invidia condemnationem, tunc in vestra confusione amare flebitis." —EDDIUS, c. 23. Cf. BEDE, iv. 21.

Hilda, protectress of the Celtic ritual, remain always relentlessly, implacably hostile to him,[1] but not one of the abbots whom his example had imbued with the Roman and Benedictine spirit came to his succour; neither Benedict Biscop, who was as much Roman at heart, and by his numerous pilgrimages to Rome, as Wilfrid himself; nor the pious, humble, and austere Cuthbert, whose sanctity was already known in the very country and diocese of Wilfrid, and nourished through many ages the popular devotion of northern England. Except his own personal followers, very numerous indeed, and warmly attached to him, all that Northumbria in which the Celtic apostles had wrought so many wonders, remained either hostile or profoundly indifferent. This indifference and hostility of the country, arising, no doubt, from an excessive susceptibility of national sentiment, is again apparent at a later date in the histories of Anselm and Thomas à Becket. It is a point of resemblance between these illustrious men and the first great bishop of the English race which must strike every observer.

The modern reader will not be less astonished at the ignorance of the Anglo-Saxon Church in the most elementary rules of canonical law as to the institution and immovability of bishops. When St Wilfrid was superseded at York for the first

[1] "Ut putant sit quanta miseria involvat mortales, quod illi viri quos sanctissimos celebrat antiquitas, Theodorus, Berthwaldus, Johannes, Bosa, nec non et Hilda abbatissa digladiabili odio impetierint Wilfridum." —Guill. Malmesb., f. 152. Cf. Faber, p. 88.

time, without trial, before he had even taken possession, St Chad accepted his see without hesitation; and other saints — Cuthbert, Bosa, and John of Beverley—afterwards followed his example, while the Metropolitan of Canterbury, himself inscribed in the Roman calendar, consecrated all these intruders. When the Holy See intervened on behalf of the law, its decrees met with but a tardy or equivocal acquiescence. But such causes of astonishment, too often awakened by the conscientious study of history, ought not to trouble sincere and serious minds. If the dogmas and morals taught by the Church have never varied, it has required many centuries to give to her discipline and government that form which now appears to us the only regular one. To expect in primitive times, and among young and restless nations, to find the monarchical concentration or uniform docility which, in our days, characterise the exercise of ecclesiastical authority, is to fall into the same error as those simple historians, lately so common among us, who mete out the royalty of Clovis or St Louis by the measure of the monarchy of Louis XIV.

CHAPTER IV.

JUSTICE DONE TO WILFRID AT ROME: IN ENGLAND HE IS DEPOSED, IMPRISONED, EXILED, AND RESTORED.—678-686.

Wilfrid himself carries his cause to Rome.—A storm lands him in Friesland, where he evangelises the people.—He thus becomes the first of the Anglo-Saxon apostles of Germany.—Generosity of the King of the Frisians and King of the Lombards, both of whom refuse to deliver him up to Ebroïn.—Wilfrid in Austrasia: Dagobert II.—Wilfrid at Rome: Theodore and Hilda denounce him to the Pope St Agathon. His cause is tried by a council at which the Pope presides. He obtains justice; but the principle of the division of dioceses is maintained, and the authority of the primate confirmed. Wilfrid hears at Rome of the death of Etheldreda.—He is present at the council against the Monothelites, and bears witness to the faith of all the Churches of the British Isles.—He returns to England with the Papal charter for Peterborough.—He is repulsed by the king and assembly of the Northumbrians, and then imprisoned.—Connivance of Archbishop Theodore.—Wilfrid refuses to treat with the king.—He is put in irons at Dunbar: afterwards delivered by the intervention of the Abbess Edda of Coldingham, but exiled.—Obliged to leave Mercia and Wessex, where the brothers-in-law of Egfrid reign, he takes refuge among the Saxons of the South, whom he converts to Christianity.—He teaches them to fish with nets, and frees the serfs on the domains of his new Abbey of Selsey.—His connection with the proscribed Ceadwalla, who becomes King of Wessex, and afterwards dies at Rome.—Theodore again disposes of the diocese of Wilfrid: St Cuthbert is made Bishop of Lindisfarne.—King Egfrid ravages Ireland cruelly: in spite of the entreaties of Bishop Cuthbert he invades Caledonia, and perishes there.—Queen Ermenburga, informed by Cuthbert of the death of her husband, becomes a nun.—Consequences of the defeat of Egfrid.—The Saxon bishop of the Picts takes refuge at Whitby, where Elfleda, sister of Egfrid, had succeeded Hilda.—Archbishop Theodore acknowledges his

faults towards Wilfrid: he wishes to choose him as his successor: writes in his favour to the King of the Mercians and to the Abbess Elfleda.—Connection of Elfleda with Bishop Cuthbert.—Aldfrid, long an exile at Iona, becomes King of Northumbria.—Wilfrid is recalled and re-established in his diocese.—Storms raised by him at Lindisfarne, which he abandons to another bishop.—Death of Archbishop Theodore.

HAVING decided that he would himself carry his appeal to Rome, Wilfrid left Northumbria, accompanied by his friend the chorister Eddi, and by a numerous train of clergy and laymen, who never left him. He left behind thousands of monks, initiated by him into the rule of St Benedict, and now in despair at finding themselves under the authority of new bishops strange to Benedictine traditions, and animated by a spirit totally opposed to that of their beloved superior.[1] His route towards the Continent led him through the kingdoms of Mercia and East Anglia, the princes and people of which were always favourable to him; and when he stopped at the great monasteries, at Peterborough, of which he regarded himself as one of the founders, and, above all, at Ely, where he had often dwelt, and where Etheldreda always received him as her bishop, she commissioned him to obtain for her at Rome one of those acts of privilege which were earnestly sought by monastic establishments as their most efficient safeguard against the usurpations and violences which menaced them on all sides.[2]

[1] "Multa millia monachorum suorum sub manu episcoporum noviter ordinatorum, relinquens, mœrentes et flentes."—EDDIUS, c. 24.

[2] "Apud Ely cum beatissima Etheldretha morabatur, ubi tunc et quo-

It was supposed by his enemies, who increased every day in number and bitterness, that he would take the ordinary route of pilgrims to Rome, landing in the neighbourhood of Boulogne at Etaples, and going through France. They therefore sent messages and gifts to the atrocious Ebroïn, who, stained as he was by the blood of St Leger and many other victims, still governed, as mayor of the palace, the provinces of Neustria and Burgundy. Knowing him to be capable of any crime, they begged him to lay hands on Wilfrid on his journey, rob him of all that he carried with him, and free them from the chance of his return.[1] But whether Wilfrid was warned of his danger, or whether he was simply guided by the west wind which rose while he was at sea—this wind saved his life, carrying him, and with him the first seeds of the Christian faith, to the low and marshy shores of Friesland.[2]

Mission of Wilfrid into Friesland.

The Frisians then occupied all the north-east of Germany. They were a warlike, numerous, and

tiens necessitas poposcerat, quoad vixit, officii jura episcopalis administravit. . . . Monasterium per dilectum suum Wilfridum Romæ nutu apostolico corroborandum destinavit. . . . Accepit privilegium . . . ut optaverat et eum rogaverat mater insignis Etheldretha."—THOM. ELIENSIS, c. 15, 19.

[1] The similarity of name between Wilfrid and Winfrid, bishop of Lichfield, must have been fatal to the latter. Having been deposed by the metropolitan Theodore, "per meritum cujusdam inobedientiæ," he also was going to France, and perhaps to Rome, when the satellites of Ebroïn fell upon him, killed his companion, and left him naked, "errore bono unius syllabæ seducti," says Eddi, who judges of good and evil only as they affect the interests of his hero.—Cf. BEDE, iv. 3, 6.

[2] "Flante Favonio pulsus est."—BEDE, iv. 19. Cf. EDDIUS, p. 25.

formidable people, of whom mention will often be made in the after history of monastic missions. The Gospel was then unknown to them, and Wilfrid, who had been the beginner of so many things, had also the glory of opening the way to those Anglo-Saxon apostles of Germany whose long and glorious annals we have yet to unfold. Wilfrid, who was hospitably received by the king of the country and its inhabitants, had no sooner landed on the unknown coast than he took advantage of the kindness shown him to begin a new evangelical mission. With the self-devotion and enthusiasm natural to him, he forgot the grave personal interests which were leading him to Rome in his eagerness to give himself up to this new work. He remained there a whole winter, preaching daily, with the permission of the king, Adalgisus, and with a success which repaid his toil. The year proved more than usually abundant in fish and other provisions, and this the Frisians attributed to the new God who was preached to them.[1] Nearly all their chiefs were baptised, with many thousands of the people.

He is thus the first of the Anglo-Saxon apostles of Germany.

678-679.

Meantime Ebroïn was on the watch, with no inclination to let the rich prey of which he had been informed escape from him. Having heard of Wilfrid's residence in Friesland, he sent messengers to the king with very friendly letters, in which he promised him by oath a bushel of gold coins if

Generosity of the King of the Frisians.

[1] "Doctrina ejus secundum paganos bene adjuvavit, erat enim in adventu eorum eo tempore solito amplius in piscatione et in omnibus frugifer annus."—EDDIUS, c. 25.

he would send him Bishop Wilfrid alive, or even his head. Adalgisus had all the repugnance to secrecy which had been noticed by Tacitus among the princes of Germanic race, who loved to discuss their affairs at feasts, since at such a moment the heart is most frank and open, most prone to generous impulses, and least apt to dissimulate.[1] The King of the Frisians accordingly collected all his people at a great banquet, together with his different guests; on the one side the emissaries of Ebroïn, on the other Wilfrid and his followers, amongst whom was Eddi, who has described the scene. After the banquet, he caused the letter of the powerful minister of the Franks to be read aloud. When this was finished he took the letter, tore it up, and threw the pieces into the fire, saying to those who had brought it, "Go and tell your master what you have seen, and add that I have said, 'Thus may the Creator tear, destroy, and consume the perjurer and traitor!'"[2] It is evident that chivalry was just bursting from the bud among these new Christians. Wilfrid,however, could only stay to reap a first and rapid harvest. He had

[1] "Plerumque in conviviis consultant: tanquam nullo magis tempore aut ad simplices cogitationes pateat animus, aut ad magnas incalescat. . . . Deliberant dum fingere nesciunt."—*De Moribus Germaniæ*, c. 22.

[2] "Modium plenum solidorum aureorum. . . . Rex, præsentibus nobis, et nuntiis coram populo suo in palatio epulantibus, omnibusque audientibus. . . . Enuntiate domino vestro hoc modo me dicentem: Sic rerum Creator regnum et vitam in Deo suo perjurantes, factumque nullum non custodientes scindens destruat, et consumens in favillam devellat!"—Eddius, c. 26.

left in his monastery at Ripon a young Northumbrian, brought to him in infancy by his mother, whom he had carefully educated for thirteen years. And it was for this child, a faithful disciple of the great exile, since venerated by the Churches of England and Germany under the name of Willebrord, that God reserved the glory of bringing permanently into the ranks of Christianity this warlike nation.[1]

679. Wilfrid in Austrasia.

Wilfrid resumed his journey towards Rome in spring, crossing Austrasia, where the throne was occupied by a prince who had occasion to know the generous hospitality of the Abbot of Ripon. This was Dagobert II., grandson of the first king of that name, who, dethroned in infancy by Grimoald, mayor of the palace, was sent secretly to Ireland, where he found refuge in a monastery; but when in 673 the Austrasian nobles determined to escape the yoke of Ebroïn, who was already master of Neustria and Burgundy, they recalled the tonsured prince whose brilliant youth, according to

656.

[1] Wilfrid always maintained his connection with Friesland. A curious story told by Bede (iii. 13), which describes the veneration of their national saint, King Oswald, introduced by the Northumbrian missionaries, seems to indicate that Wilfrid himself visited the country a second time in one of his later voyages with Willebrord and his successor Acca. M. Albertingk Thym, in his recent and curious account of St Willebrord, does not resolve this question. But the Bollandists (vol. vi. Sept., p. 68) decide that Wilfrid, in returning from Rome twenty years after his second voyage, passed through Friesland, and that he may then have been accompanied by Willebrord and Acca. Fourteen years after his first stay in Friesland in 692, it was to Wilfrid that they sent Bishop Swidbert, another Saxon missionary, to be consecrated.—BEDE, v. 11.

travellers, blossomed in a Hibernian cloister. It was to Wilfrid that they addressed themselves for the restoration of the royal exile; and it was Wilfrid who, after having magnificently received and entertained him at Ripon, sent him on his way to Austrasia with large presents and a great escort.[1] Dagobert showed his gratitude not only by giving him an affectionate reception, but by his entreaties to Wilfrid to accept the bishopric of Strasbourg, then vacant, and the most important in the kingdom.

Where he refuses the bishopric of Strasbourg.

Wilfrid, however, refused, and pursuing his route, arrived in Lombardy, where he was most hospitably received by Berchtaire, king of that country.[2] There, also, he had been anticipated by the enmity of his countrymen, and once more the great bishop owed his life to the honour and good faith of a barbarian, but already Christian, prince. He said to Wilfrid, "Your enemies have sent to me from England, with promises of great presents if I will prevent you by violence from proceeding to Rome; for they treat you as a fugitive bishop. I have replied to them thus: 'I was myself exiled from my country in my youth, and lived with a king of the Avares, who was a pagan, and who swore before

The King of the Lombards refuses the offers of his enemies.

[1] "Amici et propinqui ejus viventem et in perfecta ætate florentem a navigantibus audientes, misere nuntios ad B. Wilfridum, petentes ut eum de Scotia et Hibernia ad se invitasset et sibi ad regem emisisset."—EDDIUS, c. 27.

[2] It is apparent from the introduction to the text of Eddi published by Mabillon, that the latter and Adrian de Valois take this to prove that the country described by Eddi as *Campania* was no other than Lombardy.

his idol not to deliver me up to my enemies. Some time afterwards they sent to offer this pagan king a bushel of gold if he would give me up to them. He refused, saying that his gods would break the thread of his life if he broke his oath. With better reason I, who know the true God, will not lose my soul were it to gain the whole world.'"[1] Having said this he gave Wilfrid and his people an honourable escort which guarded them all the way to Rome.

Thus on the north and south of that mass of Germanic nations just touched by Christianity, there flashed out at Wilfrid's touch sparks of that generous loyalty which afterwards developed into Christian honour, and the lofty ideal, ever inaccessible yet ever desired and pursued, of chivalry. Wilfrid may be congratulated on having been one of the first to awaken in the history of our forefathers the premonitory signs of this magnificent dawn.

Wilfrid at Rome. 679.

At the moment when Wilfrid arrived at Rome for the second time—returning persecuted but famous to the city which he had left twenty years before obscure and unknown—the chair of St Peter was occupied by a Sicilian monk named Agathon: since the time of St Gregory the Great, all the monasteries of Italy and Sicily followed the rule

The Pope Agathon a monk.

[1] "Fui aliquando in die juventutis meæ exsul de patria expulsus, sub pagano quodam rege . . . qui iniit mecum fœdus in deo suo idolo. . . . Ego quanto magis, qui Deum meum scio, animam meam pro totius mundi lucro in perditionem non dabo."—EDDIUS, c. 27.

of St Benedict, and, consequently, we cannot doubt that he was a Benedictine. Accordingly it was natural that he should be favourably disposed towards the Bishop of York, in whom he found at once the propagator of Benedictine rule and the champion of Roman authority. But he also showed great consideration for Wilfrid's antagonist, Archbishop Theodore, whom he had just summoned to Rome by a special envoy, for the council convoked against the Monothelite heresy. Theodore did not obey the summons of the Pope, but he sent a very exemplary monk named Coënwald with letters full of violent accusations against Wilfrid.[1] Messengers charged with a similar commission arrived from the Abbess of Whitby, St Hilda, still embittered against him who had won the day in the great struggle carried on in the very bosom of her monastery fifteen years before. This singular intervention of the great abbess, which is recorded and proved by a pontifical rescript a quarter of a century after the event,[2] shows at once the great place she held in the English Church, and the intensity of her resentment against Wilfrid.

Wilfrid's cause is judged by council at which the Pope presides.

The Pope confided the judgment of the affair to an assembly of fifty bishops and priests collected in the Basilica of the Saviour, at which he himself presided. The companion of Wilfrid has left us a

[1] "Modestæ religionis monachus. . . . Accusationes scriptas deferens et amaritudine delationis verbis immitibus."—GUILL. MALMESB., f. 149.

[2] See the letter of Pope John VI. quoted by Eddius (c. 51), written to the Kings of Northumbria and Mercia in 705.

kind of official account of the last session of this assembly, which shows, under the profusion of superlatives then used in all the documents of the Roman Court,[1] an indulgent sympathy for both the rivals, together with the moderation and impartiality natural to the Head of the Church.

The cardinal-bishops of Ostia and Porto made a report to this assembly, equally founded upon the memorials sent by Theodore and others, in which Wilfrid was spoken of as a fugitive bishop, and on those which Wilfrid himself produced for his defence. They concluded thus :—"All being considered, we do not find him convicted canonically of any crime which merits deposition : on the contrary, we perceive that he has preserved great moderation, and has excited no sedition by which to regain his position. He has contented himself with protesting in presence of the other bishops his brethren, and has then had recourse to the Holy See, where Christ, who purchased the Holy Church by His blood, has founded the primacy of the priesthood." The Pope then said, "Wilfrid, Bishop of York, is at the door of the hall of our secret deliberations with his petition — let him enter." The bishop being introduced, begged that his prayer should be again read in full assembly. It

[1] The Pope is always described as "sanctissimus et ter beatissimus," and Theodore as "sanctissimus ;" Wilfrid is only named with the epithet "Deo amabilis." The violent Eddi himself is won by this example, and while he transcribes this document he treats Theodore as a saint, and his envoy Coënwald as "religiosus monachus."

was expressed in terms equally able and touching: "I, Wilfrid, the humble and unworthy Bishop of the Saxons, have taken refuge here as in an impregnable fortress. I have climbed, by the grace of God, to this apostolic summit, from whence flows to all the Churches of Christ the rule of the holy canonical law; and I have a hope that justice will here be rendered to my humbleness. I have already explained, *viva voce* and in writing, how, without being convicted of any fault, I have been expelled from the diocese which I have governed for ten years; and how they have put in my place, not one bishop only, but three bishops, contrary to the canons. I do not dare to accuse the most holy Archbishop Theodore, because he has been sent by the Church. I submit myself here to your apostolic judgment. If you decide that I am no longer worthy to be a bishop, I humbly accept the sentence; if I am to reclaim my bishopric, I shall obey equally. I implore you only to expel, by the authority of this council, the usurpers of my diocese. If the archbishop, and the bishops my brethen, see fit to augment the number of bishops, let them choose such as I can live amicably with, and let them be elected with the consent of a council, and taken from the clergy of their future dioceses, so that the Church may not be ruled from without and by strangers. At the same time, confiding absolutely in apostolic justice, I shall obey implicitly its decrees."

He obtains justice.

After this speech, the Pope congratulated Wilfrid on his moderation and humility. Then the council decreed that Wilfrid should be restored to his see; that those who had replaced him should be expelled; but that the archbishop should ordain bishops with the title of coadjutors, bishops chosen by Wilfrid himself in a council assembled for that purpose. All this was commanded under pain of interdict, deposition, and anathema, against whosoever might oppose this decree, whether bishop, priest, deacon, monk, layman, or even king.[1]

This sentence was a most wise and legitimate decision; for, while giving full satisfaction to that justice which had been outraged in the person of Wilfrid, it enforced, on the terms he had himself

[1] "Agatho . . . dicit: 'Wilfridus Deo amabilis episcopus . . . præ foribus nostri secretarii moratus, ad nostrum secretarium juxta suam postulationem cum petitione, quam secum adfere licitus est, ammittatur.' Wilfridus . . . dixit: 'Deprecor vestram pontificalem Beatitudinem ut meæ humilitatis petitionem excipi coramque relegi præcipiatis. . . . Quid acciderit ut Theodorus sanctissimus me superstite in sedem quam . . . dispensabam . . . ordinaret episcopos, omittere magis quam flagitare pro ejus Dei viri reverentia condecet; quem eo quod ab hac apostolica sede directus est, accusare non audeo.' . . . Si placuerit archiepiscopo et coepiscopis meis ut augeatur numerus episcoporum, tales eligant de ipso clero Ecclesiæ, quales in synodo placeat congregatis episcopis, ut non a foris et alienis dominetur Ecclesia. . . . Si quis proinde contra horum statutorum synodalium decreta ausu temerario obsistere tentaverit . . . ex auctoritate B. Petri . . . eum hac sanctione percellendum censemus, ut, si episcopus est . . . sed ab episcopali ordine destitutus, et æterni anathematis reus; similiter si presbyter . . . si vero clericus, monachus vel laicus cujuslibet ditionis, vel rex: extraneus efficiatur et corpore et sanguine Christi: nec terribilem ejus adventum dignus appareat conspicere."—EDDIUS, c. 28, 30. It will be seen that this decree of the council does not repeat, with regard to kings and other powerful lay personages, the threat of deposition, together with excommunication, contained in the celebrated diploma of St Gregory the Great cited above, vol. ii. p. 126.

accepted, the evidently reasonable principle of the division of his overgrown diocese.

The council of Rome confirms the authority of Theodore.

Besides this, the same assembly, probably in the same session, rendered full justice to the apostolic zeal of Archbishop Theodore, by prescribing a new arrangement of bishoprics, so that the metropolitan might have twelve suffragans, canonically elected and ordained, of whom none should interfere with the rights of his neighbour. It also sanctioned the prohibitions decreed by the archbishop, who forbade ecclesiastics to bear arms, and to mingle in secular amusements with female musicians and other profane persons. Finally, the Pope and the council charged Theodore to complete the work of St Gregory and St Augustin, by convoking an assembly, wherein the kings, princes, nobles, and leaders of the country might confer with the prelates, and where they could provide for the exact observance of apostolic rules. It was also recommended to him to hold assemblies of this kind as frequently as possible, in order to provide, in concert with the faithful and the wisest men of the kingdom, for those measures most advantageous to the Church and people of God.[1]

[1] "Armis non utantur, nec citharedas habeant, vel quæcumque symphonia, nec quoscumque jocos vel ludos ante se permittent. . . . Ut ipse . . . cum universis præsulibus, regibus, principibus, universis fidelibus, senioribus, majoribusque natu totius Saxoniæ, publicam œcumenicamque faciant synodum. . . . Ut quidquid sanctus Theodorus cum sapientibus et fidelibus et viris religiosis in Anglorum provinciis, totis ecclesiis et universo populo Dei ibidem positis profuturum melius ac religiosius invenire potuissent . . . laborare atque transcribere." — *Concilia*, ed.

Wilfrid receives at Rome intelligence of the death of Etheldreda.

Wilfrid made no haste to quit Rome, after having obtained justice. He remained there several months, and occupied himself among other matters in obtaining pontifical charters for two English monasteries which, though situated beyond the limits of his diocese, lay very near his heart—those of Peterborough and Ely. He had just succeeded in respect to Ely, and expected to carry back a deed of privilege such as the Abbess Etheldreda had requested of him, when he received news of the death of this sainted queen, whose friend and spiritual father he had been, and whose supernatural resolution had been the first cause of his pilgrimage as an exile and accused man to Rome. Probably of all the Christian souls of his own country, hers was the one most tenderly and closely united to his. All that he had suffered through her, and in her cause, must have rendered her peculiarly dear to his generous heart. Etheldreda died young, a victim to one of the contagious diseases which were then so frequent. She had predicted her own death, as well as the number of those brothers and sisters of her community who would follow her to the grave. Three days before her death she was obliged to submit to a painful operation in the

23d June 679.

COLETTI, t. vii. p. 603. The Bollandists (vol. vi. Sept., p. 69), contrary to the opinion of P. Pagi and the editors of the Collections of Councils, believe that the council where Pope Agathon gave the decrees relative to Archbishop Theodore was distinct from that which did justice to Wilfrid a year later. While accepting their chronology, we do not think that their arguments ought to prevail against the ancient opinion, founded on the text of the Acts themselves.

throat; she rejoiced at it. "God," she said, "has sent me this suffering to expiate the frivolity of my youth, the time when I remember to have worn with so much pleasure necklaces of pearls and gold on this neck now so swollen and burned by illness." At the last moment, surrounded by the brothers and sisters of her numerous community in tears, she spoke to them at length, imploring them never to let their hearts rest on the earth, but to taste beforehand, by their earnest desires, that joy in the love of Christ which it would not be given to them to know perfectly here below.[1] She carefully directed that they should bury her, not in a stone vault like a queen, but in a wooden coffin, and among the simple nuns.[2]

The death of Etheldreda must have saddened Wilfrid's stay at Rome, where, however, he was still 27th Mar. 680.

[1] "Scio certissime quia merito in collo pondus languoris porto, in quo juvenculam me memini supervacua monilium pondera portare : et credo quod ideo me suprema pietas dolore colli voluit gravari, ut sic absolvar reatu supervacuæ levitatis : dum mihi nunc, pro auro et margaritis, de collo rubor tumoris ardorque promineat."—BEDE, iv. 19. "Monens eas ut animum de supernis nunquam deponerent et suavem cibum cælestis jucunditatis in Christi amore suspirando gustarent, quem adhuc in carne agentes perfecte apprehendisse non poterant."—THOM. ELIENSIS, c. 21.

[2] In spite of these directions, sixteen years after her death, in 695, her sister, who had succeeded her as Abbess of Ely, wished to place her in a mausoleum of white marble, richly carved, which she took from the ruins of the Roman city of Granchester, near Cambridge. On this occasion it was seen that her body had preserved all its freshness; she seemed to sleep ; the surgeon who had opened the tumour in her neck, and who was present at this exhumation, recognised the wound he had made : "Pro aperto et hiante vulnere cum quo sepulta erat, tenuissima cicatricis vestigia parerent." This miraculous preservation appeared to all a decisive proof of the incorruptible virginity which she had guarded throughout her life, even to Bede, who celebrated the translation of the saint's body

He assists at the council against the Monothelites.

treated with confidence and distinction by the Pope. He was admitted to the council of one hundred and twenty-five bishops assembled under the presidency of Agathon, to name deputies for the sixth general council which was about to be held at Constantinople for the condemnation of the Monothelite heresy, a heresy which recognised but one single will in the Son of God made man. For half a century this heresy had troubled the Church; it had been adopted by various Byzantine emperors, and had thirty years before led the holy Pope, Martin I., to the most painful of martyrdoms. In the synodical letter which these hundred and twenty bishops, chiefly Italians, wrote to the emperors, in the name of all the provinces of the West, is found this passage: "You have ordered us to send you wise and virtuous ambassadors. There is no secular eloquence among us. Our lands are desolated by the fury of contending races; there is nothing but battles, inroads, and pillage. In the midst of these barbarians, our life is full of anguish; we live by the labour of our hands, for the ancient patrimony of the Church has been, little by little, devoured by various calamities. Our faith is the only patrimony which remains to us; to live for it is our glory; to die for it our eternal advantage." After

in an elegy which he has inserted in his History, and in which classic recollections are mingled with those of the martyrology to honour the Anglo-Saxon queen:—

"Bello Mars resonet, nos pacis dona canamus;
Carmina casta mihi, fœdæ non raptus Helenæ;
Dona superna loquar, miseræ non prælia Trojæ."

having described the catholic and apostolic faith, held by all under the terms defined by the Holy See, they add: "We are late in replying to your appeal, because may of us live far away, and even on the coasts of the great Ocean. We had hoped that our colleague and co-servitor Theodore, archbishop and philosopher of the great island of Britain, would come with the bishops of his country, as well as of yours and of other places, so that we might write to you in the name of our whole council, and that all may be informed of what takes place, for many of our brethren are in the midst of barbarous nations, Lombards, Sclavonians, Goths, and Britons, all very curious touching the faith, and who being all agreed with us as to the faith, would become our enemies if we gave them any subject of scandal."[1]

This letter, signed by the Pope and the hundred and twenty-five bishops, was signed also by Wilfrid as representative at the council of the British bishops,[2] although those bishops had given him no commission on the subject; but he felt himself authorised to bear this witness to the faith of the British

[1] "Sola est nostra substantia fides nostra: cum qua nobis vivere summa gloria est; pro qua mori lucrum æternum est. . . . Sperabamus de Britannia Theodorum confamulum et coepiscopum nostrum, magnæ insulæ Britanniæ archiepiscopum et philosophum . . . exinde ad nostram humilitatem conjungere."—*Concilia*, ed. COLETTI, t. vii. p. 707, 714.

[2] "Ego Wilfridus, humilis episcopus sanctæ Ecclesiæ Eboracenæ insulæ Britanniæ, legatus venerabilis synodi per Britanniam constitutæ, in hanc suggestionem quam pro apostolica nostra fide unanimiter construximus, similiter subscripsi."—Cf. GUILL. MALMESB., f. 150. FLEURY, *Hist., Ecclésiast.*, l. xl. c. 6, 7.

Church. His confidence was the better justified, since in the same year Archbishop Theodore held a national council at Hatfield, where all the bishops of England made their solemn profession of faith, and declared that they received the four general councils and the council of Pope Martin against the Monothelites.[1] It seems even that Wilfrid undertook to guarantee not only the faith of the Anglo-Saxon bishops, but also of all the Churches scattered in the north of Great Britain and in Ireland, among the Scots and Picts. Thus the Celtic Christians, whom he had so persecuted and opposed as to peculiar rites, inspired him with no doubt as to their unity of belief on all points which related to the faith; and he did not hesitate to answer for them before the Pope and the universal Church.[2]

17th Sept. 680.

He declares strongly in favour of all the Churches of the British Isles.

When Wilfrid at last made up his mind to return to England, new dangers met him on the way. He expected to meet again his friend and host, King Dagobert, in Austrasia, but that prince had just fallen a victim to a plot fomented by Ebroïn, one of whose creatures, an unhappy bishop,[3] lay

Wilfrid returns to England.

[1] BEDE, iv. 17.

[2] This is the result of another signature of his, different from that which we have quoted, though given in the same council, appealed to by him, and admitted by Pope John VI. twenty-five years later. It is thus expressed: "Ego Wilfridus . . . cum aliis cxxv. episcopis in synodo in judicii sede constitutus, et pro omni aquilonali parte, Britanniæ et Hiberniæ insulis quæ ab Anglorum et Britonum, nec non Scotorum et Pictorum gentibus incolantur, veram et catholicam fidem confessus est, et cum subscriptione sua confirmavit."—BEDE, v. 19. EDDIUS, c. 50.

[3] Mabillon thinks this was Waïmer, Duke of Champagne, made Bishop of Troyes by Ebroïn, to reward his services against St Leger.

in wait for the great Anglo-Saxon with a band of armed men, with the intention of robbing him, killing or selling into slavery all his companions, and delivering him to the implacable Ebroïn. This bishop reproached Wilfrid with having sent back from exile the tyrant Dagobert, from whom they had just freed themselves. "I only did," said Wilfrid, "what you yourselves would have done if an exile of our race and of royal blood had come to you to seek an asylum." "You are more just than I am," replied the bishop; "pass on your way, and may God and St Peter be your aid!"[1]

He brings to Peterborough the charter of Pope Agathon.

When Wilfrid arrived in England, his first step before proceeding to his diocese in Mercia was to give to King Ethelred the charter he had obtained from the Pope, with the sanction of the hundred and twenty-five bishops of the council at Rome, in favour of the great abbey of that kingdom and of central England at Peterborough, the foundation of which he had approved fifteen years before, and to which he now put the final crown. The deed of Pope Agathon, addressed to the King of Mercia, to Archbishop Theodore, and to Bishop Sexwulf, who had been the first abbot of the *Burg* of St Peter, conferred on the monastery an exemption from all ordinary charges and jurisdiction. In this document the king was recommended to be the defender of the community, but never its tyrant; the diocesan bishop to regard the abbot

[1] "O rectissime episcope, quid aliud habuisti facere, si exsul de genere nostro. . . . Video te justiorem me esse."—EDDIUS, c. 31.

as his assistant in the evangelical ministry; the metropolitan to ordain in his own person the abbot elected by the community. This charter was sanctioned and signed by the King, the Queen, Archbishop Theodore, and his friend Abbot Adrian; and finally by Wilfrid himself, with this formula, "I, Wilfrid, on my way to reclaim, by apostolical favour, my see of York, being witness and bearer of this decree, I agree to it."[1]

Wilfrid is repelled by the king and the assembly of the Northumbrians.

But the confidence which Wilfrid thus expressed was singularly misplaced. We now reach the most strange incident of all his stormy life. Having returned to Northumbria, conformably to the instructions of the Pope and the bishop, he humbly presented to King Egfrid, who had expelled him, that which he regarded as the standard of victory, namely, the decree of the Holy See and council of Rome, with the seals and signatures of all the bishops. The king convoked the assembly of nobles and clergy, and caused the pontifical letters to be read in their presence. Upon this there arose an ardent opposition. The authority of the Pope or the council was not disputed, but there were cries on all sides that the judgment had been bought. By the advice of the whole council, and with the express consent of the intruded

[1] "Ego Wilfridus, apostolico favore repetens sedem Eboracensem, testis et relator hujus sanctionis votivæ assentior." I follow the text given by Dugdale (i. 67), which P. Pagi considers free from the interpolations and anachronisms of that found in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (anno 680); the Bollandists, however, regard it as tainted with error.

bishops, the king condemned Wilfrid to an ignominious imprisonment of nine months. He was at once taken prisoner; nothing was left to him but the clothing he wore; his servants and adherents were dispersed, and his friends strictly forbidden to visit him. Queen Ermenburga, his old and pitiless enemy, took from him his *Chrismarium* or reliquary which he wore round his neck, and took possession of it, having it always hung in her chamber or in her carriage when she travelled, either as a trophy of her victory or from that sincere but savage devotion which at times took such strange forms, and was the cause of such dishonest actions. This done, the noble Bishop was confided to one of the king's officers, Count Osfrid, who removed him so that none of his friends might know where he was, and shut him up in a cell which during the day was scarcely penetrated by a few feeble rays of light, and where at night he was not permitted to have a lamp.[1]

He is imprisoned.

It is comprehensible that a barbarous Saxon king, full of pride and cupidity, and a passionate and angry woman, should give themselves up to

Connivance of the archbishop Theodore.

[1] "Vexillum victoriæ ferens, hoc est, apostolicæ sedis judicium . . . cum bullis et sigillis signatis. . . . Omnibus principibus ibidem habitantibus, nec non servis Dei in locum synodalem accersitis. . . . Jussione regis et ejus consiliatorum, cum consensu episcoporum qui ejus episcopatum tenebant . . . novem menses *sine ullo honore* custodire censuerunt . . . in suo solo vestimento. . . . Regina chrismarium hominis Dei reliquiis plenum (quod me enarrantem horruit) de se abstractum, in thalamo suo manens, aut curru pergens juxta se pependit. . . . Comes . . . in latebrosis locis, ubi raro sol per diem inluxit, et lampas per horrorem noctis non accenditur."

such excesses against a bishop whose wealth, power, moral influence, and fearless character, excited their jealousy. But what was St Theodore doing meanwhile? He, so eager, three years before, to make himself the instrument of the King of Northumbria's violent deeds, where was he now when the repairing of his error was in question? He, the metropolitan and chief of the Anglo-Saxon bishops, how could he suffer the episcopal dignity to be outraged in the person of the most illustrious of his brethren? He, the veteran monk, so zealous for the traditions and privileges of his order, how could he yield to the violence of laymen or to the jealousy of the Celts the most ardent propagator of the Benedictine rule? He, the envoy and direct representative of the Holy See in England, how dared he contemn that pontifical decision which Wilfrid had been charged to signify to him? Above all, how dared he brave the anathemas which the decree of the council directed against all traitors, whatever their rank?[1] On these questions, history, so abundant in other details, keeps entire silence; she leaves us no other resource than to look for future repentance and expiation for so shameful a connivance at sin.[2]

After a while King Egfrid resolved to treat with his captive. He offered to restore to him a part of his bishopric, with many gifts added to it, if Wil-

[1] "Si quidem episcopus est, qui hanc piam dispositionem temerare tentaverit, sit ab episcopali ordine destitutus, et æterni anathematis reus."

[2] BOLLAND., l. c., p. 62.

frid would acquiesce in his will, and acknowledge the falsity of the apostolic decree. Wilfrid replied that it would be easier to take his head than to tear such a confession from him. When he was cast back into his cell, he there gave an example of patience and courage truly episcopal. The guards heard him chanting the psalms as if he were in his monastic stall at Ripon or Hexham ; at night they saw his prison illumined by a light which terrified them. The wife of Earl Osfrid having fallen dangerously ill, her husband had recourse to the holy man whom he had been appointed to guard ; he took him out of prison and led him to the bedside of the invalid. The latter, at an after period and when she had herself become an abbess, often related to her new family, with tears of gratitude, that the prisoner found her in the last stupor of departing life, yet that a few drops of holy water cast on her face, with prayer, were sufficient to cure her. Osfrid, penetrated with gratitude and admiration, quickly informed the king of what had happened. "I conjure you," said the brave Saxon, "both for your own welfare and for mine, no longer to persecute this holy and innocent bishop ; as for me, I would rather die than continue this jailer's trade."[1] Far from listening to him, the king took from him the

Wilfrid refuses to come to terms with the king.

He is transferred to Dunbar.

[1] "Adhuc vivens illa, nunc sanctimonialis materfamilias, nomine Æbba, cum lacrymis hoc narrare consuevit. . . . Adjuro te per vitam meam et salutem tuam . . . quia magis eligo mori, quam eum innoxium flagellare."—EDDIUS, c. 35, 36.

guardianship of the captive, who was sent to a castle still more remote, near Dunbar, on the shore of the Scottish sea, where he was intrusted to another earl much more harsh than Osfrid, with orders to keep him strictly isolated in his prison, and to put him in irons. But they were never able, Eddi tells us, to make these of the right size ; they were always either too large or too small to confine the hands and feet of the prisoner.

While Wilfrid thus paid the price of his glory and his courage, the king and queen made a triumphant progress through the very country where he was held prisoner. In the course of this tour, they arrived at the Monastery of Coldingham, on the seashore, not far from Dunbar, and half-way between the prison and the holy island of Lindisfarne. In this great establishment, where Etheldreda had first taken refuge, two communities, one of men and one of women, obeyed the Abbess Ebba, sister of Oswy, and aunt of Egfrid. Like Hilda at Whitby, Ebba exercised at Coldingham, with great wisdom and authority, that sort of rule at once spiritual and temporal which was the inheritance of more than one Anglo-Saxon princess ; but far from being, like Hilda, the enemy of Wilfrid, she became his liberator. During the night which the royal couple passed at the monastery, Queen Ermenburga was seized with an attack of delirium ; in the morning the abbess appeared, and as the queen, whose limbs were already contracted, seemed at the point of

death, Ebba, with the double authority of a cloistered superior and of a princess of the race of Odin, said to her nephew, "I know all that you have done; you have superseded Bishop Wilfrid without having a crime to accuse him of; and when he returned from his exile with an apostolic verdict in his favour, you robbed and imprisoned him, foolishly despising the power of St Peter to bind and to loose. My son, listen to the words of her who speaks to you as a mother. Break the bishop's chains; restore to him the relics which the queen has taken from his neck, and which she carries about with her to her own injury, as the Philistines did the ark of God; and if (as would be best) you will not restore him to his bishopric, at least let him be free to leave your kingdom and go where he will. Then, upon my faith, the queen will recover; if not, I take God to witness, that He will punish you both."[1]

Delivered by the intervention of the princess Ebba, Abbess of Coldingham.

Egfrid understood and obeyed: he sent the reliquary to Dunbar, with orders to set the bishop at liberty immediately. Ermenburga recovered, and Wilfrid, having speedily collected some of his numerous friends and disciples, took refuge in Mercia, the king of which country he supposed would be friendly towards him, in consequence of

[1] "Sapientissima materfamilias veniens ad reginam contractis membris stricte alligatam et sine dubio morientem videns. . . . Ego scio et vere scio. . . . Et nunc, fili mi, secundum consilium matris tuæ fac, disrumpe vincula ejus et sanctas reliquias quas regina de collo spoliati abstraxit, et in perniciem sui (sicut arcam Dei . . .), dimitte."—EDDIUS, c. 37.

his having brought him from Rome the deed of privilege for Peterborough. But here also his expectations were vain. He had just founded a small monastery for the use of his troop of exiles when the hatred of his enemies discovered and pursued him. Ethelred, King of Mercia, had married a sister of Egfrid; and the queens, as we see in Saxon history, were often more powerful than the kings, for evil as well as for good. Ethelred, moved by the instigation of his wife, or by fear of displeasing his powerful brother-in-law, signified to his nephew, who had given one of his estates to the persecuted bishop, that he would endanger his head if he kept the enemy of King Egfrid another day in his territory. Wilfrid, therefore, was obliged to leave Mercia, and went into the neighbouring kingdom of Wessex. But here the hatred of another queen assailed him. The wife of Centwin, King of the Western Saxons, was the sister of that Ermenburga who had been the first cause of the poor exile's troubles: she had espoused her sister's quarrel; and again he was obliged to fly from a country in which there was no hospitality for him. These three brothers-in-law, kept by a common animosity in unwonted union, reigned over the three kingdoms which together occupied three-quarters at least of Saxon England.[1]

He is, however, compelled to leave Mercia,

And Wessex.

[1] "In eo territorio pro Deo donato monasteriolum fundavit, quod adhuc usque hodie monachi ejus possident. . . . Audientes hominem Dei . . . illic manentem et modicum quiescentem, Beorthvaldo in sua salute interdicunt, ut sibi eo minus diei spatium esset pro adulatione

Wherever the influence of the Northumbrian king could extend, there was no longer for Wilfrid either security or peace.

He takes refuge with the Saxons of the South, and converts them to Christianity. 681–683.

Thus pursued by the influence of Ermenburga, her husband, and brothers-in-law, from almost the whole territory of the Saxon Confederation; repelled from Canterbury and its environs by the hostility or indifference of Archbishop Theodore, he took refuge in the smallest and most obscure of the seven kingdoms, and the only one which had not yet been christianised, the kingdom of the Southern Saxons. The asylum which Christian kings refused him he hoped to find among his pagan countrymen. It may perhaps be recollected that he had been in great danger fifteen years before, at the commencement of his episcopate, on his return from his consecration at Compiègne, when wrecked on this inhospitable coast.[1] The King of Sussex himself, who was still a pagan like his subjects, had been then the leader of the wreckers. Now the king was a Christian, thanks to his wife, a Mercian princess; but the country continued almost completely inaccessible to Catholic missionaries. This kingdom had furnished to the Heptarchy its first known Bretwalda, Ælla, but since that time had fallen into obscurity, being

Egfridi regis. . . . Nam illic regina . . . odio odebat eum, uti propter amicitiam regum trium dehinc fugatus abscessit. . . . Ita ut de propria provincia expulsus, nec in aliena regione, ultra vel citra mare, ubi potestas Egfridi prævaluit, requiem haberet."—EDDIUS, c. 38, 39.

[1] See above, p. 184.

defended at once against the invasions of its powerful neighbours, and against the efforts of the Canterbury monks, by its rocks and forests, which rendered it difficult of approach,[1] a circumstance which is hardly comprehensible now in sight of that soft and fertile country. The inhabitants held sternly to their ancient faith; they reproached the other Saxons, who were already Christians, with their apostasy. At the same time, they had among them the beginnings from which, in ordinary cases, the conversion even of the most obstinate was produced—namely, a Christian princess and a monastery. This monastery, however, was occupied only by the small community of Celtic monks, of whom mention has already been made,[2] and the people of Sussex gave no heed to their teaching. It was to this new soil that Wilfrid came: he might be driven from his country and from his diocese, but nothing could prevent his being, wherever he was, the minister of the living God, and the preacher of the truth. His first exile had made him the Apostle of the Frisians; his second gave him occasion to open the doors of the Church to the last pagans who remained to be converted in the British Isles. Like Æneas at Carthage, he touched and gained the heart of the king and queen by his story of the cruel trials of his exile. He enlightened

[1] "Præ rupium multitudine et silvarum densitate . . . inexpugnabilis."—EDDIUS, c. 39.

[2] Page 126.

and roused their minds; he preached to them with infinite sweetness the greatness and goodness of God; and he obtained permission to address the mass of their people to whom no one had yet dared to carry the word of life.

Thus daily, for many successive months, the proscribed and fugitive bishop stood forth among those unconquered Saxons, and told them all the series of miracles worked by the Divine Power since the creation of the world; he taught them to condemn idols, to believe in a future judgment, to fear eternal punishment, and to desire eternal happiness. His persuasive eloquence triumphed over all obstacles. The chiefs of the nation, the earls and thanes, demanded baptism at his hands: four priests of his followers baptised the rest of the nation; a few, however, resisted; and the king thought himself authorised to compel them to follow the example of their countrymen.[1] This melancholy fact must be confessed with regret, and forgiven, in consideration of the age and race, to which violence was so natural and so contagious; but it must be added that this is the sole instance in

[1] "Et si propter inimicitias regis in patria sive parochia sua recipi non potuit; non tamen ab evangelizandi potuit ministerio cohiberi . . . concedendo, imo multum gaudente rege primos provinciæ duces ac milites sacrosancto fonte abluebat."—BEDE, iv. 13. "Totius exsilii sui austeritatem per ordinem narravit . . . leniter suadens. . . . Stans episcopus noster in medio gentilium . . . per plures menses longo ambitu verborum . . . suaviloqua eloquentia omnia mirabiliter per ordinem prædicavit . . . paganorum utriusque sexus, quidam voluntarie, allii vero coacti regis imperio . . . in una die multa millia baptizata sunt."—EDDIUS, c. 39.

which force was employed in the whole history of the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons, a work which Wilfrid had the glory of completing by the noble labours of his exile.[1]

The God whom he preached to these last pagans permitted his mission to be the channel of other blessings besides the gift of salvation. Before Wilfrid's arrival, a drought of three years' duration had desolated the country, and famine decimated the population. The poor famished creatures might be seen dragging themselves, by forty or fifty at a time, to the edge of the precipitous cliffs on the shore, and thence, holding each other by their emaciated hands, they would plunge together into the sea.[2] But on the very day when Wilfrid administered baptism to the chiefs, a soft and abundant rain watered the desolate fields, and restored to all the hope of a plentiful harvest.[3] While the cruel famine lasted the bishop had taught his future converts a new means of gaining their subsistence by fishing with nets. Until his arrival, although the waters of the sea

He teaches them the art of fishing with nets.

[1] Bede says nothing of this use of force which contrasted too strongly with the conduct he had so much praised in the first Christian King of Kent (i. 26); but, unhappily, we must believe the testimony of Eddi, who, if not actually with Wilfrid on his mission to Sussex, as at other places, must yet have known better than any one else exactly what passed there.

[2] "Sæpe quadraginta simul aut quinquaginta . . . procederent ad præcipitium . . . et junctis misere manibus, pariter omnes aut ruina perituri aut fluctibus absorbendi deciderent."

[3] "Ipso die . . . pluvia serena sed copiosa descendit, refloruit terra, rediitque viridantibus arvis annus lætus et frugifer."—Bede, iv. 13.

and of their rivers abounded with fish, they had been able to catch nothing but eels.[1] Wilfrid did not disdain to teach them how to join all their little nets into one large enough to catch the biggest fish. By such services he gradually gained the hearts of those whose souls he wished to save. The King of Sussex was as grateful as his people. He proved it by giving to the apostle of his country, for a residence during his exile, the domain on which he himself lived, and which supported eighty-seven families—that is to say, was, according to Saxon calculations, capable of feeding that number of mouths, and consequently quite sufficient for the train of monks and other Northumbrians who followed the exile in his wanderings. This estate formed a peninsula, which was called Seal's Island. Here Wilfrid founded a monastery, which afterwards became the seat of the most southern diocese of England,[2] and which he filled, half with monks who had come with him from the north, and half with novices taken from the converts of the south. These monks soon united in celebrating, among the other festivals of the Catholic liturgy, the feast of St Oswald, the king who died fighting for the Christian faith and

Foundation of Selsey.

[1] "Docuit eos piscando victum quærere. Piscandi peritia genti nulla nisi ad anguillas tantum inerat. . . . Collectis undecumque retibus anguillaribus."—BEDE, iv. 13.

[2] "Donavit terram octoginta septem familiarum ubi suos homines qui exules vagabantur. . . . Vocabulo *Sele-seu*," afterwards called Selsey, created a bishopric in 711, and transferred to Chichester in 1070.

the independence of Northumbria, some years after the birth of Wilfrid; and this particular shows us how the unity of faith and associations consecrated by the new religion prepared the way for the social and political union of the different races of Great Britain.[1]

Wilfrid found on his new possessions two hundred and fifty slaves of both sexes, whom he not only delivered from the yoke of Satan by baptising them, but also from that of men by setting them free.[2] It was thus that the monastic apostles sowed from a full hand, in England as elsewhere, bread for the soul and for the body, salvation and freedom.

681–686. Five years thus passed over Wilfrid, in his laborious but fruitful exile, of which the conversion of the Southern Saxons was not the only consolation. While the proscribed bishop reconstituted a centre of monastic life and Christian evangelism in his peninsula of Selsey, the forests of Sussex gave asylum to a whole band of other exiles, of whom the chief was a young prince of the Western Saxons named Ceadwalla, who had been banished from Wessex by the same king who, acting on the suggestion of his wife, expelled Wilfrid. The similarity of their

[1] "Ex hoc tempore non solum in eodem monasterio, sed in plerisque locis aliis, cœpit annuatim ejusdem regis ac militis Christi natalitias dies missarum celebratione venerari."—BEDE, iv. 14.

[2] "Servos et ancillas . . . quos omnes, non solum baptizando a servitute dæmoniaca salvavit, sed etiam libertatem donando humanæ jugo servitutis absolvit."—BEDE, l. c.

fortunes united the two fugitives, though the western prince was still a pagan. Wilfrid, who seems never to have feared a danger, or refused to do a service, procured horses and money for Ceadwalla. The exiled prince, whose impetuosity and boldness were only surpassed by his cruelty, seized, one after the other, the two kingdoms of Wessex and Sussex, laid waste the kingdom of Kent, and ended by conquering the Isle of Wight. This picturesque island, so much admired by modern travellers, and which lies between the two districts occupied by the Saxons of the West and South, was inhabited by twelve hundred pagan families of the tribe of the Jutes, a race which first of all the German invaders had landed upon the coast of Kent. The ferocious Ceadwalla slaughtered them all, to avenge the wounds he had received in attacking them. But his mind was pervaded by a vague instinct of religion such as he had seen in Wilfrid, although he had not been moved to adopt it. Before he invaded the island he made a vow that, if victorious, he would give a quarter of his booty to the God of Wilfrid, and he kept his word by granting to the bishop a quarter of the conquered and depopulated island. He even carried his cruel condescension so far as to permit the monks to instruct and baptise two young brothers of the chief of the island before cutting them down in the general massacre. And the two young victims marched to death with so joyous a confidence, that the popular veneration

Relations of Wilfrid with Ceadwalla, an exile like himself,

And who becomes King of Wessex.

He gives Wilfrid a fourth part of the Isle of Wight.

long counted them among the martyrs of the new faith. This savage, as soon as he returned to Wessex, summoned Wilfrid thither, treated him as his father and friend, and put himself definitely under instruction. But as soon as he understood, thanks to the teaching of Wilfrid, what religion and the Church meant, he found baptism by Bishop Wilfrid insufficient, and it will be hereafter seen that he went to Rome, as much to expiate his crimes by a laborious pilgrimage, as to receive baptism at the hands of the Pope.

21st Aug. 686.

Although the report of Wilfrid's fresh apostolic conquests, and of his relations with the kings of the provinces nearest the metropolis of Canterbury, must certainly have reached the ears of Archbishop Theodore, the conduct of that prelate towards him continued inexplicable. In spite of the decrees of the Holy See, he held at Twyford, in Northumbria, a council, where, with the consent of King Egfrid, he disposed of the episcopal sees of Hexham and Lindisfarne, exactly as if these dioceses had not been parts of that of York, or as if Wilfrid had been dead or canonically deposed.[1] The first bishop thus placed by Theodore at Hexham, a see created in the very monastery built and endowed by Wilfrid, was an admirable monk, named Cuthbert, whose virtues and sanctity had long been celebrated in Northumbria; and, what is stranger still, nothing in the fully detailed life of this saint which has been

Theodore disposes anew of the diocese of Wilfrid. 684.

[1] BEDE, iv. 28; BOLLAND, t. vi. Sept., p. 64.

preserved to us, shows that his repugnance to be made bishop had any connection with the manifest violation of the rights of him whose place he was called upon to usurp. All that he desired was to be transferred from Hexham to Lindisfarne—that is to say, to the episcopal monastery where he had been educated, and in which, or in one of its dependencies, he had always lived. He evidently believed that the metropolitan supremacy of Theodore was without limit, and dispensed him from following the canons of the Church.

King Egfrid professed the most affectionate devotion to Cuthbert ; but this need not astonish us. The persecutor of Wilfrid was far from being the enemy of the Church or of the monastic order. He was, on the contrary, the founder and benefactor of many of the great monasteries of the north of England, and the friend of all the saints of his time, except Wilfrid alone ; and it seems to have been his wish to transfer to Cuthbert the confiding affection and respectful deference with which he had treated Wilfrid in the early part of his reign. Ermenburga, the cruel enemy of Wilfrid, was, like her husband, filled with the most ardent veneration for the holy monk, who had become one of the successors of her victim. But this devotion did not prevent Egfrid from giving himself up to ambition, and indulging in a thirst for war and conquest too much conformed to the traditions of his ancestors and pagan predecessors, "the Ravager," and "the

King Egfrid

Cruelly ravages Ireland, 684,

Man of Fire."[1] In 684, without any known motive, he sent an army against Ireland, which devastated that island with pitiless cruelty. This invasion is the first of the unexpiated national crimes of the Anglo-Saxons against Ireland. It excited the indignation, not only of the victims, but also of the witnesses of its barbarity. The venerable Bede himself, though little to be suspected of partiality, or even of justice, as regards the Celts, points out the crime committed by the king of his nation against an innocent people, who, far from espousing the cause of the British Celts, had always been the friends and allies of the Anglo-Saxons. The soldiers of Egfrid did not even spare those great and holy monasteries where the Anglo-Saxon youth were in the habit of going to learn evangelical piety and knowledge, or where, as at Mayo, there lived a numerous community of Northumbrian monks who had preferred to forsake their country, and remain faithful to the teachings of their first apostles, rather than to submit to the triumph of Wilfrid and the Roman rule. The poor Irish, after defending themselves to the utmost, were everywhere vanquished, and had no other resource left but that of seeking by constant and solemn imprecations to call down the vengeance of heaven upon their unworthy assailants.[2] This time at least their too legitimate curses were realised.

[1] See vol. iii. p. 426.

[2] "Gentem innoxiam et nationi Anglorum semper amicissimam. . .

In vain the Northumbrian Egbert, an illustrious and most learned monk of Lindisfarne, who had voluntarily banished himself to Ireland for the love of Christ and the benefit of his soul,[1] and who had great authority in both islands, supplicated the king of his native country to spare a people who had in no way provoked his anger. In vain the holy bishop Cuthbert, together with the best friends of the king, endeavoured in the following year to dissuade him from commencing a war, not less cruel, and perhaps not less unjust, against the Picts. Egfrid would listen neither to one nor the other, but hurried to his ruin. He himself led his troops, and permitted them under his very eyes to devastate the invaded country with atrocious cruelty.[2] The Northern Celts retired before him, and thus succeeded in drawing him into a Highland pass, where he perished with his whole army, while still scarcely forty years of age, and after a reign of fifteen years. It was the counterpoise and return for the victory he had gained at the beginning of his reign in the days of his happy union with Wilfrid. This disaster was the signal for the liberation of the Celtic races whom Oswald, Oswy, and Egfrid had brought under the yoke

Despite the entreaties of the Northumbrian monk Egbert.

Despite those of Bishop Cuthbert, he invades Caledonia, and perishes there.

20th May 685.

At insulani . . . cælitus vindicari continuis diu imprecationibus postulabant."—BEDE, iv. 26.

[1] "Venerabilis et cum omni honorificentia honorandus famulus Christi et sacerdos Egbert quem in Hibernia insula peregrinans ducere vitam pro adipiscenda in cœlo patria retulimus."—BEDE, v. 9.

[2] "Dum Egfridus . . . eorum regna atroci sævitia devastabat."—BEDE, *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 27.

of Northumbria, a yoke now broken for ever. The Picts, the Scots, and the Britons of Strathclyde, together rushed upon the Angles, and drove them from the whole conquered territory between the Firth of Forth and the Tweed. Since then the northern frontier of Northumbria and of all England has remained fixed at the line which runs from the mouth of the Tweed to the Solway Firth. And since then, also, the Angles who remained north of the Tweed have been subject to the Scots and Picts, forming with them the kingdom henceforward called Scotland. From that day the splendour of Northumbria was eclipsed.[1]

Queen Ermenburga informed by Cuthbert of the fate of her husband.

Queen Ermenburga awaited the result of her husband's expedition in a monastery governed by one of her sisters at Carlisle, in the centre of the British population of Cumberland;[2] and the holy bishop Cuthbert, to whom King Egbert had given this town with its environs, came to the same place to console her in case of a misfortune which he but too clearly foresaw. On the day after his arrival, as the governor of the town accompanied him towards the ancient ramparts of the Roman city, he made a sudden pause, and, leaning on his staff, said with a sigh, "Alas! I fear that all is over, and that the judg-

[1] "Ex quo tempore spes cœpit et virtus regni Anglorum fluere ac retro sublapsa referri."—BEDE, *Hist. Eccles.*, iv. 26.

[2] Carlisle was, as we have said, emphatically British. Even to the present day Cumberland has retained its British population. It bore the title of Kingdom in the middle ages, after it had escaped from the Northumbrian yoke.—VARIN, memoir already quoted, p. 236; see also Spruner's Historic Atlas.

ment of God has come upon our army." When he was urged to explain what he meant, he merely replied, "See how clear the sky is, and remember that the judgments of God are inscrutable."[1] Upon this he immediately returned to the queen, and told her that he feared the king had perished, and that she ought to start not the next day, which was Sunday, a day on which it was unlawful to travel in a carriage,[2] but on the Monday, to seek refuge in the royal fortress of Bamborough, where he promised to join her.

Two days afterwards a fugitive from the battle came to tell that at the very hour indicated by the saint, King Egfrid, whose guards had all perished in his defence, had been killed by the avenging sword of a Pict.

Takes the veil.

Ermenburga bowed to the Divine hand which struck her. She took the veil from the hands of Cuthbert in her sister's monastery at Carlisle. This Jezebel, as she is called by the friend of Wilfrid, changed suddenly from a wolf into a lamb,[3]

[1] "Stans juxta baculum sustentationis . . . suspirans, ait: O, ô, ô! existimo enim perpetratum esse bellum, judicatumque est judicium de populis nostris bellantibus adversum. . . . O filioli mei, considerate quam admirabilis sit aer, et recogitate quam inscrutabilia sint judicia Dei."—*Tertia Vita auctore Monacho coævo*, ap. BOLLAND., t. iii. Martii, p. 123. The version of Bede, in the *Life of S. Cuthbert*, ch. 27, says, on the contrary, "Nonne videtis quam mire mutatus et turbatus sit aer!"

[2] "Quia die dominico curru ire non licet." Even now, among the descendants of the Anglo-Saxons inhabiting Scotland, popular piety renders it difficult to travel on Sunday.

[3] "De lupa, post occisionem regis, agna Domini et perfecta abbatissa materque familias optima commutata est."—EDDIUS, c. 23. Cf. BEDE, *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 27, 28.

and became the model of abbesses. The body of her husband was not buried at Whitby, as those of his father and grandfather had been,[1] but carried, perhaps as a trophy of the victory, to the monastic island of Iona, which had been the asylum of his race in their exile, and which was still the national sanctuary of the victors.

Consequences of Egfrid's defeat.

Wilfrid, banished and deprived of his diocese, was thus but too well avenged. The Northumbrian kingdom, which had struck in his person at the independence and growing authority of the Church, paid the price of its fault by losing half its dominions, and by witnessing the downfall of that political and religious edifice which had been built upon the ruin of the Bishop of York.

The Saxon Bishop of the Picts flees to Whitby.

One of the new bishops substituted for Wilfrid, a Saxon monk, named Trumwine, whose see had been placed at Abercorn, on the banks of the Forth, at the extreme limit of the Northumbrian territory, escaped with difficulty from death or slavery, the only alternative which the Celtic conquerors left to their defeated enemies. With him came all his monks, whom he dispersed, as he best could, among the Northumbrian communities, as it was necessary to do afterwards with the Saxon nuns of his diocese, who fled before the irritated Celts, whom they regarded as savages. He himself sought a refuge at Whitby, where he passed the rest of his days, rendering such services as were compatible with

[1] See above, page 218.

his episcopal character to the abbess, who was invested with the difficult mission of ruling a double community of monks and nuns.[1] It was no longer Hilda the holy foundress who governed this great establishment; it was a daughter of Oswy, a sister of the three last Northumbrian kings, that Elfleda, whom her father had devoted to God as the price of his victory over the Mercians, and who, intrusted from infancy to Hilda, had grown up in the shadow of the great sea-side monastery. Her mother, Queen Eanfleda, the widow of Oswy, and first protectress of Wilfrid, had joined her there, to end her days in peace beside the tomb of her husband, and under the crosier of her daughter.

Archbishop Theodore acknowledges his wrongs toward Wilfrid,

The adversaries of Wilfrid thus vanished one by one. Of the three principal authors of his ruin, Egfrid was now dead, and Ermenburga a veiled nun. There still remained Archbishop Theodore. Whether the death of Egfrid had acted as a warning to him, or whether the recollection of his apostolic mission, which, in respect to Wilfrid, he had so ill fulfilled, came back to his mind, with a

[1] "Inter plurimos gentis Anglorum vel interemptos gladio, vel servitio addictos, vel de terra Pictorum fuga lapsos . . . recessit cum suis, eosque ubicumque poterat amicis per monasteria commendans . . . in monastica districtione non sibi solummodo, sed et multis utilem ducit . . . ipse in supradicto famulorum famularumque Dei monasterio. Adveniente illuc episcopo, maximum regendi auxilium simul et suæ vitæ solatium devota Deo doctrix invenit."—BEDE, iv. 26. He died there in 700. We find that St Cuthbert assigned a residence in a town of his diocese to the Northern nuns, "timore barbarici exercitus a monasterio suo profugis." —*Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 30.

remorse made keener by age and illness, at least it became apparent to him that the moment for confessing and expiating his fault had come, and he did so with the complete and generous frankness which belongs to great minds.[1] He was an old man even at the moment when he was taken from his Eastern monastery to be placed at the head of the English Church, and he had now laboured nearly twenty years in that fruitful but rude and thorny field. He was thus more than eighty, and the day of his death could not be far distant. The archbishop perceived that if death overtook him before he was reconciled to Wilfrid, the great works he had accomplished in regulating, purifying, and consolidating the morals and Christian institutions of England would be in some degree contradicted before God and men, by the sight of the great bishop, who had been robbed and exiled solely for having defended his rights and obeyed the Holy See. Accordingly, he summoned Wilfrid to him. Sussex, the residence of the exile, was near to Canterbury, or rather to London, where the interview took place, in presence of a holy monk, who was Bishop of London and of the East Saxons.[2] In presence of these two bishops, the countryman and successor of St Paul[3] made his

[1] "Auctoritatem apostolicæ sedis, a qua missus fuerat, metu agitante, honorificans."—EDDIUS, c. 41. "De peccato in Wilfridum commisso sauciatus conscientiam."—GUILL. MALMESB., f. 151.

[2] Earconwald, of whom more will be said later.—BEDE, iv. 6, 11.

[3] The English have an old tradition, according to which St Paul,

general confession. When he had ended, he said to Wilfrid, "My greatest remorse is for the crime I have committed against you, most holy bishop, in consenting to the will of the kings when they robbed you of your possessions and sent you into exile without any fault of yours. I confess it to God and St Peter, and I take you both to witness that I will do what I can to make up for this sin, and to reconcile you with all the kings and nobles, among my friends, whether they wish it or not. God has revealed to me that I shall die within a year; therefore I conjure you, by the love of God and St Peter, to consent that I establish you during my life as heir to my archiepiscopal see, for I acknowledge that of all your nation you are the best instructed in all knowledge and in the discipline of Rome."[1] Wilfrid answered, "May God and St Peter pardon you all our controversy. I shall always pray for you as your friend. Send letters now to your friends that they may be made aware of our reconciliation, and the injustice of that robbery of which I have been the victim, and that they may restore to me at least a part of my goods, according to the command of the Holy See. After which we will examine with you in

And desires to secure to him the succession to the archbishopric.

born, like Theodore, at Tarsus in Cilicia, was the first to preach the Christian faith in Britain.

[1] "Sapienter totius vitæ suæ cursum cum confessione coram Domino pure revelavit. . . . Cunctos amicos meos regales et principes eorum ad amicitiam tuam . . . volentes nolentesque constringens adtraho . . . quia veraciter in omni sapientia et in judiciis Romanorum eruditissimum te vestræ gentis agnovi."—EDDIUS, c. 41.

the great council of the country who is the most worthy to become your successor."[1]

He writes in favour of Wilfrid to the King of Mercia.

The old archbishop immediately set to work to repair as far as possible the injury he had done to Wilfrid. He wrote letters to all quarters, to plead his cause and to secure for him as many friends as he had once sought to make him enemies.[2] Unfortunately only one of these letters has been preserved, but it is sufficient to do honour to his goodness of heart, and to show how the old Greek monk, transplanted into the midst of a Germanic population, could rule and train the souls under his authority, like a worthy successor and countryman of him who acknowledged himself, according to Scripture, "debtor both to the Greeks and Barbarians." It is addressed to Ethelred, King of Mercia, who by his means had become the friend and brother-in-law of Wilfrid's chief persecutor.[3] "My very dear son,—Let your holiness know that I am at peace with the venerable Bishop Wilfrid; therefore I beseech and enjoin you, by the love of Christ, to give him your protection as you formerly did, to the utmost of your power, and as long as you live; for all this time while robbed of his possessions, he has laboured for God among the heathen. It is I, Theodore, the humble and infirm bishop,

[1] "Ero pro tua confessione orans pro te amicus in perpetuum. . . . Modo primum mitte nuntios cum litteris . . . ut me olim innoxium exspoliatum agnoscant . . . et postea . . . quis dignus sit . . . cum consensu tuo in majori consilio consulemus."—EDDIUS, c. 41.

[2] "Sibi ubique amicos, quasi prius inimicos, facere diligenter excogitavit."—*Ibid.*

[3] See BEDE, iv. 21.

who in my old age address to you this exhortation, according to the apostolic will, so that this holy man may forget the injuries of which he has been so unjustly the victim, and that amends may be made to him. I would ask you besides, if you still love me, although the length of the journey may make my request importunate, let me see once more your dear countenance, that I may bless you before I die. But above all, my son, my dear son, do what I conjure you to do for the holy Wilfrid. If you obey your father who will not be much longer in this world, obedience will bring you happiness. Adieu, peace be with you, live in Christ, abide in the Lord, and may the Lord abide in you."[1] This letter had its due effect. Ethelred received Wilfrid with great honour, although six years before he would not suffer him to spend a single night in his kingdom; he restored all the monasteries and domains which had formerly been his in Mercia, and to the end of his life remained faithfully attached to him.

To the Abbess Elfleda.

But it was in Northumbria above all that it was important to obtain restitution for the robbed and humiliated bishop. For this purpose Theodore addressed himself to the new king Aldfrid and to the

[1] "Cognoscat tua miranda sanctitas, pacem me in Christo habere cum venerando episcopo Wilfrido. . . . Ego Theodorus, humilis episcopus, decrepita ætate, hoc tuæ beatitudini suggero . . . et licet tibi pro longinquitate itineris durum esse videatur, oculi mei faciem tuam jucundam videant. . . . Age ergo, fili mi, fili mi, taliter de illo supra fato viro sanctissimo, sicut te deprecatus sum. . . . Vale in pace, vive in Christo, dege in Domino, Dominus sit tecum."

princess Elfleda, sister of the king, and Abbess of Whitby, who had naturally inherited a dislike for Wilfrid from St Hilda, from whom she had received her education, before becoming her successor, and whose vast buildings she was about to complete.[1]

Death of Ebba of Coldingham. 25th Aug. 683.

Hilda had been quickly followed to the grave by her illustrious rival Ebba, who was, like herself, a princess of the Northumbrian royal dynasty, and abbess of a double monastery at Coldingham. The young Elfleda, niece of Ebba and heiress of Hilda, was therefore the sole representative in Northumbria of that great and salutary authority which was so willingly yielded by the Anglo-Saxon kings and people to those princesses of their sovereign races who became the brides of Christ.

Connection of the Abbess Elfleda with Bishop Cuthbert. 680.

The noble Elfleda, who was scarcely twenty-five years of age when she was called to succeed Hilda as Abbess of Whitby, is described by Bede as a most pious mistress of spiritual life. But like all the Anglo-Saxon princesses whom we meet with in the cloister at this epoch, she did not cease to take a passionate interest in the affairs of her race and country. All the more strongly, in consequence, she felt the need of spiritual help to aid her virgin motherhood in ruling the many souls gathered together under her crosier.[2] It was chiefly to

[1] "Præcipuum monasterium . . . quod ab insignis religionis femina Hilda cœptum, Edelfleda ejusdem regis filia in regimine succedens, magnis fiscalium opum molibus auxit."—GUILL. MALMESB., *De Gest. Reg.*, iii.

[2] "Devota Deo doctrix . . . quæ inter gaudia virginitatis non paucis famularum Christi agminibus maternæ pietatis curam adhibebat . . .

Cuthbert that she had recourse. Before he had become bishop, while he lived on a desert rock near Lindisfarne, she had prevailed on him to grant her an interview in an island on the Northumbrian coast, called then, as now, Coquet Island, and which lies nearer Lindisfarne than Whitby. This was while her brother Egfrid still reigned. The hermit and the abbess went each to their meeting by sea; and when he had answered all her questions, she threw herself at his feet, and entreated him to tell her, by virtue of those prophetic powers with which he was known to be gifted, whether her brother Egfrid should have a long life and reign. "I am surprised," he answered, "that a woman well taught and versed as you are in the knowledge of Holy Scripture should speak to me of length with regard to human life, which lasts no longer than a spider's web, as the Psalmist has said, '*Quia anni nostri sicut aranea meditabuntur.*' How short then must life be for a man who has but a year to live, and who has death at his door!" At these words, she wept long; then, drying her tears, she continued, with feminine boldness, and inquired who should be the king's successor, since he had neither sons nor brothers. "Do not say," he replied, "that he is without heirs; he shall have a successor whom you will love, as you love Egfrid, as a sister." "Then tell me, I entreat you, where this successor

venerandissima virgo et mater virginum . . . multo virum Dei semper excolebat amore."—BEDE, iv. 26, in *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 24. Cf. 34.

is." "You see," returned Cuthbert, directing the eyes of his companion towards the archipelago of islets which dots the Northumbrian coast around Lindisfarne, "how many isles are in the vast ocean; it is easy for God to bring from them some one to reign over the English." Elfleda then perceived that he spoke of a young man supposed to be the son of her father Oswy, by an Irish mother, and who, since his infancy, had lived as an exile at Iona, where he gave himself up to study.[1]

Accession of King Aldfrid in Northumbria. 685–705.

And it thus happened in reality that the cruel and warlike Egfrid was succeeded on the most important throne of the Anglo-Saxon confederation by a learned prince who, during twenty years of a long and prosperous reign, sustained and restored to the utmost extent of his powers the ancient glory of the Northumbrian kingdom, within the new limits to which the victorious insurrection of the Picts had restricted it, but who specially distinguished himself by his love of letters and knowledge. Aldfrid[2] had passed his early days at Iona, in that island retreat where his father Oswy and

[1] "Repente in medio sermone advoluta pedibus ejus, adjuravit eum. . . . Hæc audiens fusis lacrymis præsagia dira deflebat: extersaque facie, rursus audacia feminea adjuravit per majestatem summæ divinitatis. . . . Cernis hoc mare magnum et spatiosum, quot abundat insulis! Facile est Deo de aliqua harum sibi provideri, quem regno præficiat Anglorum. Intellexit ergo quia de Aldfrido diceret, qui tunc in insulis Scotorum ob studium litterarum exsulebat."—BEDE, *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 24.

[2] It has already been said that he must not be confounded with Alchfrid, the eldest legitimate son of Oswy, and Wilfrid's first friend. Aldfrid was a natural son, and probably the eldest of Oswy's children.

his uncle Oswald had both found refuge in their youth, and whither the bleeding body of the brother whose crown descended to him had just been carried. During his long, and perhaps voluntary, exile in the Scottish monasteries and schools, he had been trained in theology and dialectics, cosmography, and all the studies then cultivated by the Celtic monks. He brought back from his residence at Iona, and his visits to Melrose and other places, that passionate curiosity and lavish liberality which may be traced among the Irish of the seventh century, and which seems a kind of prelude to the revival of learning in the fifteenth century.[1]

To this new king, as well as to his sister, the Abbess Elfleda, Archbishop Theodore wrote, to exhort them both to lay aside their enmity against Wilfrid, and to receive him with unreserved kindness.[2] A prince so much given to letters could not remain deaf to the prayers of an archbishop who added to his authority as legate of the Holy See and primate of the Anglo-Saxon Church the fame of greater learning and zeal for intellectual cul-

Wilfrid is recalled.

[1] "Qui nunc regnat pacifice, qui tunc erat in insula quam Hy nominant."—*Vita brevis S. Cuthberti*, ap. BOLLAND., t. iii. Mart., p. 141. "Vir in Scripturis doctissimus. . . . Destructum regni statum quamvis intra fines angustiores nobiliter recuperavit."—BEDE, *Hist.*, iv. 26. "Qui in regionibus Scotorum lectioni operam dabat, ibi ob amorem sapientiæ spontaneum passus exilium."—BEDE, *Vita Cuthberti*, c. 14. "Ab odio germani tutus, et magno otio litteris imbutus, omni philosophia composuerat animum."—WILLELM. MALMESB., *De Gest. Reg.*, c. 52.

[2] "Ut simultatibus retropositis incunctanter caritatem ejus complecterentur."—BOLLAND., t. ii. Febr., p. 184.

ture than had ever before been seen in Britain. Ac-
686. cordingly, in the second year of his reign, Aldfrid recalled Wilfrid to Northumbria, and restored to him, first, the Monastery of Hexham, with all the surrounding parishes, then the bishopric of York, and finally Ripon, which had been his chosen home, and the centre of his reforms. It is easy to understand the joy of the monks of those great communities, formed by Wilfrid, who had, no doubt, daily prayed for the restoration of their father. They went out to meet him in crowds, and led him back in triumph to the churches he had built for them.[1] The bishops formerly placed by Theodore at Hexham, Ripon, and York,[2] were dismissed; and the holy Bishop of Lindisfarne having voluntarily abdicated to return to his solitary rock of Fern,
20th Mar. 687. and there prepare for his approaching death, Wilfrid was charged to appoint his successor.

The four dioceses formed by the division of the great diocese of York, which comprehended all the country north of the Humber, were thus once more
Storms excited by Wilfrid at Lindisfarne. united under the crosier of Wilfrid. But a restoration so complete lasted only a year: the administration of Wilfrid met great opposition at Lindis-

[1] "In gaudio subjectorum suorum de exsilio . . . rediens."—EDDIUS, c. 43. "Crebra monachorum examina patri obviam procedunt."—EADMER, *Vita S. Wilfridi*, c. 21.

[2] This is affirmed by Eddi, a contemporary and witness of most of the facts he relates, while Bede and other authors suppose that St John, called of Beverley, a monk of Whitby who had been placed at Hexham in 685 by the Archbishop Theodore, was transferred to York when Wilfrid returned. Probably Bede anticipated by some years the nomination of John, who was certainly the successor of Wilfrid at York, after his second exile.

farne. On this subject the venerable Bede, who was as prudent as sincere, speaks only by hints.[1] It may be divined that Wilfrid took advantage of his re-establishment in his diocese to strike a last blow at Celtic traditions, and that spirit of independence which the first Scottish apostles of Northumbria had introduced into the holy island. The changes he attempted to introduce were so unbearable to the Anglo-Saxon monks of the school of Cuthbert and his masters, that they declared themselves ready to imitate their brethren who had left Ripon at the arrival of Wilfrid. They preferred to leave the first sanctuary of Christianity, and the cradle of their order in Northumbria, rather than to yield to the tyranny of their new superior. He himself became aware that their resistance was insurmountable, and at the end of a year he gave up Lindisfarne to a new bishop who, being both wise and gentle, calmed all parties.[2] 688.

Death of the Archbishop St Theodore. 19th Sept. 690.

About this time the prediction of Archbishop Theodore was verified ; he died at the age of eighty-eight, after a pontificate of twenty-two years. His conduct towards Wilfrid is open to the widest censure, and can scarcely be explained otherwise than by the jealousy inspired in the metropolitan of Eng-

[1] "Tanta ecclesiam illam tentationis aura concussit, ut plures e fratribus loco magis cedere, quam talibus vellent interesse periculis." Then speaking of the successor of Wilfrid : "Fugatis perturbationum procellis . . . sanavit contritos corde, et alligavit contritiones eorum . . . quia post ejus (Cuthberti) obitum repellendi ac destruendi essent cives sed post ascensionem minantis iræ cælestis protinus miseratione refovendi."—*Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 39.

[2] Bede, iv. 29. His name was Eadbert.

land by the splendour and power of the immense bishopric of York under a ruler such as Wilfrid. But an impartial posterity owes him at least the justice rendered him by his contemporaries, and is bound to recognise in him a man who did more than any of his six predecessors to organise and consolidate the Church of England, on the double basis of Roman supremacy and of the union of the Anglo-Saxon bishoprics among themselves by their subordination to the metropolitan see of Canterbury.[1] No bishop before him had laboured so much for the intellectual development of the native clergy, or for the union of the different Anglo-Saxon dynasties. The Greek monk, therefore, may well be reckoned among the founders of the English Church and nationality ; and when he was buried, wrapped in his monastic habit in place of a shroud,[2] in the ecclesiastical burying-ground of Canterbury, it was but just that he should be laid on the right hand of St Augustin, the Italian monk who a century earlier had cast the first seeds of faith and Christian civilisation into the soul of the Anglo-Saxon race.[3]

[1] "Tantum profectus spiritalis tempore præsulatus illius Anglorum ecclesiæ, quantum nunquam antea potuere, cœperunt."—BEDE, v. 8.

[2] "Jacebat uti a primordio erat depositus integra forma metropolitani sacerdotii pallio et monachiti tantum obductus cuculla."—GOTSELINUS, *Translatio SS. Reliq.*, l. ii. c. 27.

[3] The following lines were written by a poet of the time on the seven monks who were the first seven Archbishops of Canterbury, and who were buried side by side :—

"Septem primates sunt Anglis et proto-patres,
Septem rectores, septemque per æthra triones ;
Septem sunt stellæ, nitet his hæc area cellæ ;
Septem cisternæ vitæ, septemque lucernæ."

CHAPTER V.

SECOND EXILE OF WILFRID, AND SECOND APPEAL TO ROME.—686-705.

Rupture of Wilfrid with King Aldfrid.—New accusations against Wilfrid.—He is exiled the second time.—He is received by the King of Mercia, who gives him the bishopric of Lichfield.—He there lives eleven years in tranquil obscurity.—Theodore's successor hostile to Wilfrid, as also Abbot Adrian.—Assembly of Nesterfield.—Degrading proposals made to Wilfrid; he rejects them.—His speech.—He appeals to Rome.—Precocious talent of the Anglo-Saxons in diplomacy and despotism.—King Ethelred of Mercia remains faithful to Wilfrid.—The monks of Ripon are excommunicated.—Wilfrid's third voyage to Rome.—Contrast with the first.—Pope John VI.—The trial lasts four months, and occupies seventy sittings.—Wilfrid is acquitted.—Returning to England, he falls ill at Meaux.—His friend Acca.—His life is prolonged in answer to the prayers of his monks.—He is reconciled to the archbishop.—He goes to visit his faithful friend Ethelred, now become a monk at Bardeney.—Aldfrid, King of Northumbria, refuses to recognise the sentence of the Holy See.—He dies.—His successor expels Wilfrid within six days, but is himself dethroned.—National assembly on the banks of the Nid.—The Abbess Elfleda and the Ealdorman Bertfrid interpose on behalf of Wilfrid.—General reconciliation.—The Monasteries of Ripon and Hexham given up to him.—Influence of Anglo-Saxon princesses on the destiny of Wilfrid.

WILFRID was fifty-six when his great rival, thus tardily transformed into a repentant and faithful ally, died; and for more than a quarter of a century his life had been one continued conflict. He might

therefore hope for a little repose, and even perhaps believe it possible. But God still had in reserve for him long years of renewed trials. The first half of his history is repeated in the second with a wearisome monotony as to the events, but with the same constancy and courage in the hero of the endless struggle.[1]

Rupture of Wilfrid with King Aldfrid. 686–691.

The truce which was granted to him in the midst of his laborious career lasted but five years. It was more than once disturbed: calm and storm alternately characterised his relations with King Aldfrid, a monarch justly dear to the Northumbrians, whom his courage and ability preserved from the disastrous consequences of Egfrid's downfall. But in 691 the king, freed from the influence which Archbishop Theodore had exercised over him, as well as over all England, cast off all pretences towards the bishop, whose moral and material

[1] The following are the principal dates of the life of Wilfrid :—

664. Named Bishop of York and of all Northumbria.
665. Replaced by Ceadda, during his absence in France for his consecration. He retires to Ripon.
669. Recalled to York by the intervention of Theodore.
678. Dismemberment of the diocese; he is removed from York, and transferred to Lindisfarne; he refuses, and appeals to Rome.
679. On his return from Rome, with a judgment in his favour, he is imprisoned, and afterwards exiled.
686. After the death of Egfrid, he is a second time re-established.
691. Third expulsion by King Aldfrid, and second exile.
692. He is made Bishop of Lichfield.
703. Assembly of Nesterfield. Wilfrid refuses to sign his deposition. Second appeal to the Holy See; third voyage to Rome.
705. He returns to England. Assembly on the banks of the Nid; his two monasteries of Ripon and Hexham are restored to him.
709. He dies at Oundle.

power was an offence to him, as it had been to his father and brother. Predisposed, also, by his education and his long residence in Ireland to favour Celtic tendencies, it may be supposed that he easily allowed himself to be influenced by the rancour and ill-will naturally entertained towards Wilfrid by the disciples and partisans of Scotic monks and bishops. Thus war was once more declared between the court of Northumbria and that exclusively Roman and Benedictine spirit of which Wilfrid was the uncompromising champion.[1]

Charges against Wilfrid.

Three complaints in chief were brought against the great bishop, two of which dated back to the origin of the struggle begun by Wilfrid between the Celts and Romanists. The matter in question was the Monastery of Ripon, founded originally for a colony of Celtic novices from Melrose, but afterwards given to Wilfrid, to the injury of the first owners, and dedicated by him to St Peter, as if with the intention of holding up the standard under which he intended to fight. His new adversaries at first proposed to deprive the Church of Ripon, the true capital of Wilfrid's spiritual kingdom, of a portion of its vast possessions, and to erect this into a new bishopric, dividing a

[1] "Nam antiquæ inimicitiæ suasores, quasi de sopore somni excitati . . . facem dissensionis extinctam resuscitavere, quippe inter regem sapientissimum et sanctum virum . . . iterum in concordia, atque iterum in discordia alternatim per multos annos viventes . . . usque dum postremo maxima flamma inimicitiæ exardecescente . . . expulsus recessit. Prima causa est dissensionis eorum de antiqua origine descendens."—Eddius, c. 43.

second time the diocese of York, for the extension of Celtic influence, but in contempt of the Pontifical verdict and of the royal grant which had irrevocably guaranteed to Wilfrid and his monks the existence of this community free and exempt from all other jurisdiction.[1] Wilfrid, with his usual firmness, refused to consent to this division ; upon which his adversaries changed their tactics, and reproached him for not obeying all the decrees issued by Archbishop Theodore as legate of the Holy See. This was in evident reference to the new bishoprics erected by Theodore in Wilfrid's diocese. With address worthy of a more civilised century, the theologians of the Northumbrian king thus taught him to transform the most devoted champion of Rome into an insurgent against the authority of the Holy See, and to make of the archbishop who had just died reconciled to Wilfrid, an adversary not less dangerous after his death than during his life. Wilfrid replied that he willingly recognised the statutes made by Theodore before their rupture, and after their reconciliation —that is to say, while all the churches were canonically united—but not those which dated from the interval in which division reigned. This was a sufficient pretence for his enemies to treat him as a rebel, and consign him to a new exile.

[1] "Ut monasterium quod in privilegium nobis donabatur . . . in episcopalem sedem transmutetur ; et libertatem relinquere, quam sanctus Agatho et quique reges censuerunt fixe et firmiter possidere."—EDDIUS, c. 43.

Thus Wilfrid found himself, for the third time, deprived of the see to which he had been canonically appointed by the father and brother of King Aldfrid twenty years before; and sentenced to a second exile for refusing to lend himself to the schemes of the adversaries of law and of monastic and ecclesiastical freedom. He sought refuge in Mercia, the country which he had so often visited in the time of his sainted friend Etheldreda, where the great Monastery of Peter's Burg, with its hitherto unquestioned independence, reminded him of ancient efforts happily accomplished, and where King Ethelred, who had been definitively won over to his side by the touching letter of the aged Archbishop Theodore, and who saw in him the representative of Roman authority, offered him effectual protection and an affection which never wavered in its fidelity.[1] This king immediately called him to the vacant see of Lichfield, which, since the new episcopal division arranged by Theodore, no longer comprehended the whole of Mercia, but which still offered a sufficient field to the apostolic zeal of Wilfrid. It was the see which had been held by the gentle and pious Ceadda, who superseded Wilfrid at York, at the time of his first quarrel with King Oswy in 665. Wilfrid now succeeded his former supplanter, changing for the

He is exiled for the second time.

Wilfrid received in Mercia by King Ethelred,

Who makes him Bishop of Lichfield. 692.

[1] "Ad amicum fidelem accessit . . . qui eum cum magno honore propter reverentiam apostolicæ sedis suscepit."—Eddius, c. 43.

fourth time his episcopal residence.[1] In this obscure and restricted sphere, he contented himself with fulfilling his duties as bishop, and awaiting better
691–703. days with patience. Here he lived eleven years, and during that long interval one single trace of his active work is all that is visible—the consecration of a missionary bishop named Swidbert. This missionary, destined to be the apostle of Westphalia, had already visited that region of Friesland whither Wilfrid himself carried the first revelation of the Gospel, and whither his example had led several Anglo-Saxon monks, the traces of whose light-giving progress will be met with further on.

A descendant of Odin succeeds the Greek Theodore at Canterbury. 1st July 692.

It is evident that no one thought of doing anything to carry out the intention, so clearly expressed by Theodore, of making Wilfrid his successor. On the contrary, after an interval of two years, a priest named Berchtwald, formerly a monk at Glastonbury, and afterwards abbot of a monastery built at Reculver, on the site of the palace to which the first Christian king had retired, after giving up his capital to Augustin, was elected to the vacant see. Berchtwald was descended from the dynasty which reigned in Mercia, and was the first of the race of Odin who took his place among the successors of the apostles.[2] One Anglo-Saxon had already figured among the

[1] York, Hexham, Lindisfarne, and Lichfield.

[2] He is also called Beorchtwald, and Brithwald.—GUILL. MALMESB., *Gesta Reg.*, i. 29; HOOK, vol. i. p. 178.

archbishops of Canterbury; but as he had changed his name into the Roman appellation of *Deus-dedit*, he has been reckoned among the foreign prelates, and the national historians, chronicling the promotion of Berchtwald, write proudly, "Hitherto our bishops had been Roman; from this time they were English."[1] As there was no other metropolitan in England, he had to go to Lyons to be consecrated. He presided over the English Church for nearly forty years. He was very learned, deeply imbued with the knowledge of Holy Scripture, and of monastic discipline; but the Saxon Bede acknowledges that he was far from equalling his predecessor, Theodore the Greek.[2]

21st June 693.

But from whence arose the hostility of the new archbishop to Wilfrid? Perhaps the seeds of it had been sown in the Celto-British Monastery of Glastonbury. Except at the moment of the holy Archbishop Theodore's tardy confession and restitution, Wilfrid, from the beginning of his struggle with the Anglo-Saxon princes and prelates, seems never to have met with the least sympathy at Canterbury, the natural centre of Roman traditions and authority, and it was never thither that he went to seek a refuge in his troubles. Nothing more strongly proves

He is hostile to Wilfrid.

[1] *Anglo-Saxon Chron.*, an. 690.

[2] "Ecclesiasticis simul ac monasterialibus disciplinis summe instructus, tametsi prædecessori minime comparandus."—Bede, v. 8.

to what a point national feeling already prevailed, not indeed over the power of love and respect for Catholic unity, but over all that would compromise, even in appearance, the interests or the self-love of the Anglo-Saxon Church. Abbot Adrian, the friend and companion of Theodore, like him charged by the Holy See to watch over the maintenance of English orthodoxy, and who survived the archbishop nearly twenty years,[1] never extended a friendly hand to the man who, not without good cause, declared himself the dauntless champion and innocent victim of Roman unity. The case was the same, as we have already seen, with the illustrious and holy abbot Benedict Biscop, the founder of several new foundations, entirely Roman in spirit and heart, in the country, and even in the very diocese of Wilfrid. Is it not necessary to conclude that Wilfrid appeared, at least to his most illustrious contemporaries, to go much too far in his zeal, and to mistake the indispensable conditions of religious peace in England?

Assembly of Nesterfield. 703.

However this may have been, the new archbishop (who, we may say in passing, holds a place among the saints of the English and Benedictine calendars[2]) soon formed an alliance with King Aldfrid. The resentment of this prince had not been disarmed,

[1] He died in 710, having been thirty-nine years abbot of the Monastery of St Peter or of St Augustin at Canterbury.

[2] Under the name of Brithwaldus or Brivaut, on 9th January.

nor his resolution modified, either by the long exile of Wilfrid, or by the impunity with which Bishops Bosa [1] and John had since occupied the usurped sees of Hexham and York. Twelve years after the last expulsion of Wilfrid, the king convoked an assembly in the plain of Nesterfield, near the Monastery of Ripon, which was one of the principal causes of the struggle. Almost all the British bishops were present, the Archbishop Berchtwald himself presided, and Wilfrid was invited to take part in the proceedings, under a promise that justice would be done him, according to the canon law. He came; but the promise was so far from being kept, that his presence was only made an occasion for heaping recriminations and accusations upon him. Certain bishops, probably those who occupied the sees into which his diocese had been partitioned, distinguished themselves by their bitterness; they were supported by the king, and, it must be added, by several abbots, who perhaps disliked the Benedictine rule. An attempt was made to force him into an entire acceptance of all the statutes of the deceased archbishop. Wilfrid replied that he would do all they wished, provided it was agreeable to the canon law. Then turning upon his adversaries, he reproached them vehemently for the obstinacy with which for twenty-

[1] We have already said that this intruder figures among the English saints. Bede also calls him *Deo dilectus et sanctissimus*, v. 20. It must be remembered that he, as well as his colleague St John of Beverley, had been trained in the school of the Abbess Hilda.

681–703. two years they had opposed the apostolic authority; he demanded under what pretence they dared to prefer the laws made by the archbishop during the division of the Church of England to the decrees of three popes specially delivered for the salvation of souls in Britain? While his adversaries deliberated over the wording of their minutes, a young man attached to the service of the king, but passionately devoted to Wilfrid, who had educated him along with many other young Saxon nobles, secretly left the royal tent, and, stealing in disguise through the crowd, warned Wilfrid that a treacherous attempt would be made to obtain his signature in approval of all the council might decree—a sort of blank resignation, by means of which he might be deprived of everything he had a lawful right to, whether bishoprics or monasteries, in Northumbria, Mercia, and all other places. "After which," said this secret friend, "nothing would be left for you but to give yourself up, and lose even your episcopal character in virtue of your own signature."[1] The actual event to which

[1] "Multæ ac magnæ altercationum quæstiones ab eis exortæ . . . consensu quorumdam abbatum qui pacem ecclesiarum, avaritia instigante, nullatenus habere concupiverunt. . . . Multis et duris sermonibus eorum pertinaciam increpavit ac interrogavit eos quo fronte auderent. . . . Unus ex ministris . . . quem ille a primævo vagentis ætatulæ incunabulo enutrivit, ex tentorio regis latenter erupit. . . . Hac fraude te moliuntur decipere, ut primitus per scriptionem propriæ manus confirmes eorum tantummodo judicium . . . ut postquam isto alligatus fueris districtionis vinculo, de cetero in posterum permutare nullatenus queas . . . Ad postremum temetipsum donando, de tuo sanctitatis honore cum subscriptione degraderis."—Eddius, c. 44.

this warning referred is made known to us by the account given later by Wilfrid himself to the Pope. "I sat," he said, "in my place, with my abbots, priests, and deacons, when one of the bishops came to ask, in the name of the king and the archbishop, if I submitted to the archbishop's judgment, and if I was ready to obey what should be decreed with the consent of all, yes or no? I replied that I preferred to know, in the first place, the nature of the judgment before making any engagement. The bishop insisted, saying that he himself knew nothing, that the archbishop would say nothing until I had declared in a document, signed by my hand, that I would submit to his judgment, without deviating to the right or left. I replied that I never had heard of such a proceeding, and that it was unheard-of to attempt to bind the conscience by an oath before it was known what the oath implied. However, I promised before all the assembly that I would obey with all my heart the sentence of the archbishop in everything that was not contrary to the statutes of the holy Fathers, to the canons, or to the council of the holy Pope Agathon and his orthodox successors."[1] Then the excitement rose to its height; the king and archbishop took advantage of it by a proposal to deprive

Proposals made to Wilfrid.

[1] "Eram in concilio sedens cum abbatibus meis. . . . Respondebam quæ erat illius judicii sententia, scire prius oportet, quam confiteamur, utrum pati ea valemus exsequendo, an aliter. . . . Istius tam angustam districtionis coarctationem nunquam antea a quoquam hominum coactam audivi."—EDDIUS, c. 50.

Wilfrid of all that he possessed on either bank of the Humber, leaving him no shelter whatsoever in England. This extreme severity provoked a reaction in his favour, notwithstanding the double force of the royal and archiepiscopal authority. At last it was agreed to leave him the monastery which he had built at Ripon, on condition that he should sign a promise to live there peaceably, not to leave it without the permission of the king, and to give up the exercise of all episcopal functions.[1]

He rejects them, and appeals to Rome.

To this insulting proposal Wilfrid replied with an indignant eloquence, which his companion has well earned our gratitude by preserving for us. "By what right do you dare to abuse my weakness, force me to turn the murderer's sword against myself, and sign my own condemation? How shall I, whom you accuse of no fault, make myself a scandal in the sight of all who know that for nearly forty years I have borne, though unworthy, the name of bishop? Was not I the first, after the death of those great men sent by St Gregory, to root out the poisonous seeds sown by Scottish missionaries? Was it not I who converted and brought back the whole nation of the Northumbrians to the true Easter and the Roman tonsure, according to the laws of the Holy See? Was it not I who taught them the sweet harmonies of the primitive

[1] "Ut nec in Ultra-Umbrensium regno, nec in Merciorum minimam quidem unius domunculæ portiunculam haberet. Hujus judicii inclementia ab archiepiscopo et rege diffinita."—EDDIUS, c. 50.

Church, in the responses and chants of the two alternate choirs? Was it not I who constituted monastic life among them, after the order of St Benedict, which no one had before introduced? And after all this, I am now to express with my own hand a sudden condemnation of myself, with no crime whatever upon my conscience! As for this new persecution, by which you try to violate the sacred character with which I am invested, I appeal boldly to the Holy See. I invite any of you who desire my deposition to go there with me to receive the decision. The sages of Rome must learn the causes for which you would degrade me, before I bend to your sole will." At these words the king and the archbishop cried out, "He is guilty by his own acknowledgment. He is worthy to be condemned, if only because he prefers the judgment of Rome to ours—a foreign tribunal to that of his own country." And the king added, "If you desire it, my father, I will compel him to submit by force. At least for once let him accept our sentence." The archbishop said nothing against this proposal; but the other bishops reminded the king of the safe-conduct he had promised—"Let him go home quietly, as we shall all do."[1]

The council breaks up.

[1] "Constanter et intrepida voce elevata. . . . Qua ex causa me compellitis ut tam lugubri calamitatis miseria in memetipsum gladium diræ interfectionis . . . convertam? Nonne si aliquo reatu suspicionis offendiculum faciam? nonne et ego primus post obitum priorum procerum a sancto Gregorio directorum, curavi ut Scoticæ virulenta plantationis germina eradicarem . . . aut quomodo juxta ritum primitivæ Ecclesiæ consono vocis modulamine binis adstantibus choris persultare . . .

Such clumsy violence, addressed to objects of controversy so out of date, may no doubt cause the learned and the victorious of our days to smile; but the spirit manifested in the war made upon Wilfrid by the king and bishops is one which is never out of date. It is impossible not to be struck by the singular analogy between the means thus used and those that have been employed ever since to obtain the triumph of a bad cause. It is even astonishing to perceive the clearsightedness with which the Anglo-Saxons, both laymen and ecclesiastics, divined and availed themselves of weapons which seemed reserved for a more advanced state of civilisation. Persecution and confiscation are of all ages; but it is a striking proof of the precocious intelligence of the Anglo-Saxons of the seventh century that they thus stigmatised as a crime and anti-national preference for foreigners that instinct and natural law which induces every victim of oppression or violence to seek justice where it is free and independent; and, above all, that they had recourse to that fine invention of a blank signature, a blind assent to the will of another, wrung from those who had been skilfully reduced to the formidable alternative of a Yes or a No. And yet the men who worked

instruerem? Et nunc contra me quomodo subitam damnationis ipse protulero, extra conscientiam alicujus facinoris, sententiam? Fiduciaiter sedem appello apostolicam. . . . Modo utique culpabilis factus a nobis notatus damnetur, quod magis illorum, quam nostrum elegit judicium."—EDDIUS, c. 44. "Si præcipis, pater, opprimam eum per violentiam."—GUILL. MALMESB., 151, b.

by such means were neither impious nor rascally. On the contrary, King Aldfrid ranks among the most enlightened and justly popular princes of his time. The archbishop, and most of the bishops who persecuted Wilfrid, have been, and still are, venerated among the saints. The only conclusion to which we can come is, that the instincts of despotism exist always and everywhere in the human heart, and that unless vigorously restrained and curbed by laws and institutions, they break out even in the best, choosing the same forms, laying the same snares, producing the same baseness, inspiring the same violences, perversities, and treacheries.

It was not without difficulty that, after the dispersion of the assembly of Nesterfield, the noble old man escaped from the violence of his enemies, and returned to Mercia to his faithful friend King Ethelred. When Wilfrid had repeated all the threats and insults with which the bishops had loaded him: "And you," said he to the king, "how do you intend to act towards me with regard to the lands and goods you have given me?" "I," replied the honest Ethelred, "I shall certainly do nothing to add to so great a wrong; nor, above all, to injure the monastic life which now flourishes in our great Abbey of St Mary;[1] I shall on the contrary main-

King Ethelred of Mercia remains faithful to him.

[1] The king thus designated the Abbey of Peterborough, first called Medehampstede, and situated on the borders of Mercia and East Anglia, in the fenny country, where at the same period arose Ely, Croyland, Thorney, &c.

tain it as long as I live, and will change nothing of what I have been able to do by the grace of God, until I have sent to Rome ambassadors who will accompany you, and take with them my deeds of gift. I hope they will there do me the justice deserved by a man who desires no other recompense."[1]

But while the generous Ethelred thus promised and continued his protection to the persecuted bishop and to the monks of the Burg of St Peter, who had always so deeply interested him, the King of Northumbria and his adherents redoubled their violence and their anger. Sentence of excommunication was pronounced against the monks of Ripon, because of their fidelity to the cause of their founder, who was at the same time their abbot and bishop. Poor Eddi, who was one of them, relates with indignation how the spoilers, not content with invading the patrimony of Wilfrid, showed and excited everywhere, against his disciples and partisans, the horror which attached to excommunicated persons. Food or drink which had been blessed by a monk or priest of Wilfrid's party was thrown away as if it had been offered to idols; and every cup or other utensil touched by a Wilfridian had to be washed and purified before it could be used by these pretenders to orthodoxy.[2]

Excommunication of his monks at Ripon.

[1] "Majorem non addo perturbationem, destruendo monachorum vitam . . . usquequo prius tecum nuntios proprios vel scripta proprietatis ad Romam præmisero interrogare de his imminentibus causis, quomodo recta desiderans salvus inveniar."—EDDIUS, c. 45.

[2] "In tantum communionem nostram exsecraverunt, ut si quis-

The unfortunate excommunicated monks of Ripon, to whom the result of the Assembly of Nesterfield was communicated by the invectives and outrages of which they were the object, consoled themselves as they best could by redoubling their prayers and austerities, and praying night and day, in sorrowful union with all the other Wilfridian monasteries, for their aged and courageous father, who was again about to undertake the long and laborious journey to Rome.[1] Thus Wilfrid again set out, as he had done three times before, to seek enlightenment and justice from the successor of St Peter. A party of faithful monks accompanied him; but he had no longer the stately train of former days, and it was on foot that he crossed the immense space which divided him from Rome.[2] And how many other changes were there since his first journey, when the young favourite of Queen Eanfleda travelled, with all the eagerness of a youth of twenty, towards the Eternal City! He was now seventy: he was a bishop, and had been so for forty years, but a bishop robbed of his possessions, expelled from his diocese for the third time, misunderstood, persecuted, calumniated, not only by the wicked and tyrants, but by his brethren in

Third journey of Wilfrid to Rome.

Contrast with his first.

piam . . . refectionem suam . . . signo crucis Dei benediceret, foras projiciendam ac effundendam, quasi idòlo-lythum judicabant: et vasa de quibus nostri vescebantur, lavari prius, quasi sorde polluta jubebant, antequam ab aliis contingerentur."—EDDIUS, c. 46.

[1] "Die noctuque clamantes, in jejunio et fletu cum omnibus subjectis nostris congregationibus fundentes precem."—EDDIUS, c. 47.

[2] "Pedestri gressu."—EDDIUS, c. 47.

the episcopate, by his hierarchical superior, and by his countrymen. The old saints, the old kings, the good and holy queens, who had encouraged his first steps in the apostolic life, had disappeared, and with them how many friends, how many brothers in arms, how many disciples prematurely snatched from his paternal hopes! Not only the delightful illusions of youth, but also the generous persistence of manhood, had been compelled to give place in his soul to the consciousness of treason and ingratitude and failure—failure a hundred times proved of his efforts, yet a hundred times renewed in behalf of truth, justice, and honour.

Nevertheless he went on and persevered; he held high his white head in the midst of the storm; he was as ardent, eloquent, resolute, and unconquerable in his old age as in the first days of his youth. Nothing in him betrayed fatigue, discouragement, vexation, nor even sadness.

Thus he pressed on, and, after a second stay in Friesland,[1] crossed the countries of Neustria, Austrasia, and Lombardy, all agitated and eaten up, like other nations, by the struggles and passions of this world; all wasted, desolated, and ruled by the wild licence of military and material force. He advanced into the midst of them, bearing in his heart and on his countenance the love of

[1] It is only at this period of Wilfrid's life that I can place his residence in Friesland with his pupil Willibrord, whose successor, Acca, entertained Bede, and of whom the latter speaks in his *Ecclesiastical History*, book iii. chap. 3.

law, a law purely spiritual, which swayed souls, which addressed hearts, and which alone could overcome, regulate, and pacify all those new and different races—a law which can never perish, but which from age to age, even to the end of the world, will inspire in its champions the same courage, constancy, and fervour, which burned in the heart of the aged Wilfrid during his long and fatiguing journey. He was going to Rome, but what might be his reception there? Would any recollection still remain of the brave young pilgrim of the time of St Martin, the last martyr pope? or of the victorious and admired bishop of the time of St Agathon, the Benedictine pope? Five other popes had occupied the chair of St Peter since Agathon.[1] During this long interval, no mark of sympathy, no aid had come from Rome to Wilfrid, in all his struggles and sufferings for the cause which he loved to regard as that of the Roman Church and its law, authority, and discipline. And the apostolic throne at this moment was occupied by John VI., a Greek, countryman of that Theodore who had cost Wilfrid so many contradictions and trials.

Pope John VI.

It was to this pontiff that he and his companion presented, on their knees, their memorial, declaring that they came to accuse no one, but to defend

[1] Leo II., Benedict II., John IV., Conon, Sergius I. From a passage of Wilfrid's speech at Nesterfield, it appears that Popes Benedict II. and Sergius had interposed in his favour, but no trace of their acts on the subject has been preserved.

themselves against accusations, by flying to the foot of his glorious see as to the bosom of a mother, and submitting themselves beforehand to all that his authority might prescribe. Accusers could not have been wanting, for there soon arrived envoys from the holy Archbishop Berchtwald, with a written denunciation of Wilfrid.[1] The Pope inquired into the matter in a council at which many bishops and all the Roman clergy were present. Eddi, who must have accompanied his bishop to Rome this time also, has preserved the details in full. Wilfrid perceived the necessity of being conciliatory and moderate in his pretensions, and restrained his ambition within the bounds of a humble prayer. He read before the assembly a paper, in which he recalled to its recollection the decrees given in his favour by Popes Agathon, Benedict, and Sergius, and demanded the execution of them in his own name and in that of the monks who had accompanied him to Rome. He then entreated the Pope to recommend King Ethelred to guarantee to him, against all covetousness or enmity, the monasteries and domains which he held from the Mercian kings for the redemption of their souls. Finally, in case the complete execution of the Pontifical decrees, which had ordained his reinstatement in his bishopric and in all his patrimony,

[1] "Neminem per invidiam accusandum advenimus. . . . Interim legati a sancto archiepiscopo Berchtvaldo cum suis scriptis accusationis directis . . . pervenerunt."—EDDIUS, c. 47.

should appear too hard to the King of Northumbria, the generous old man consented to give up his diocese of York, with all the monasteries depending on it, to be disposed of at the Pope's pleasure, except his two beloved foundations of Ripon and Hexham, which he asked to be allowed to retain, with all their possessions. In another sitting the messengers of Berchtwald were heard in their turn. They declared, as their chief accusation, that Bishop Wilfrid, in full council at Nesterfield, had cast contempt upon the decrees of the Archbishop of Canterbury, whom the Holy See had placed at the head of all the churches of Great Britain. Then Wilfrid rose, and, with all the authority he derived from his venerable age, related what had really occurred. His tale gained the sympathies of the whole assembly; and the bishops, while showing the most amiable aspect to the friends of Wilfrid, began to talk Greek among themselves, so as not to be understood by the English.[1] They then addressed the Canterbury envoys as follows: "You know, dear brethren, that those who do not prove their chief accusation ought not to be allowed to prove the rest; however, to do honour to the archbishop-legate, and to this holy bishop Wilfrid, we will examine the matter fundamentally in all its details."

[1] "Stans episcopus noster, venerabili senio confectus, cum fratribus suis venerabilibus in conspectu totius congregationis. . . . Tunc inter se græcizantes et subridentes nos . . . loqui cœperunt."

The council holds seventy sittings. 703–704.

And, in fact, they held, during four months, seventy sittings. This was certainly giving a scrupulous, and, it may be said, amazing attention to a cause which may have appeared to the Italian bishops as but of secondary and far-off interest; and nothing better proves the conscientious solicitude brought by the Church of Rome to bear on the judgment of all causes submitted to her, as well as her unquestionable authority. Wilfrid appeared before his judges almost daily, and underwent a minute examination.[1] In these debates the aged orator displayed all the vigour and energy of his youth. He overturned by a word the most unforeseen objections of his accusers; with a presence of mind, which God and the truth alone could have inspired, he swept away their arguments like spiders' webs: it was a true torrent of eloquence, as says a monastic historian who, many centuries after, was still proud of the effect produced by the words of the old Saxon bishop upon the astonished Romans.[2] Nothing contributed more to the ultimate triumph of Wilfrid than the discovery, made in studying the precedents of the case, of his presence at the council held against

[1] "Per quatuor menses et septuaginta conciliabula sanctissimæ sedis, de fornace ignis . . . purificatus evasit. Pene quotidie in conflictu diligenter examinatus."—EDDIUS, c. 50, 52.

[2] "Mirantibus Romanis . . . illius eloquentiam, dum quicquid accusationum objecissent, ille nullo excogitato responso, sed Dei et veritatis fultus auxilio, quasi casses aranearum primo motu labiorum discuteret et subrueret . . . venerandum senem . . . torrentem eloquentiæ."—GUILL. MALMESB., f. 152.

the Monothelites twenty-four years before.[1] In the course of reading the acts of the former council, which was done by order of the Pope, in presence not only of the clergy but also of the nobles and people of Rome, when they came to a passage which proved the presence of Wilfrid, then as now accused, but triumphantly acquitted, and admitted to bear witness to the faith of the other bishops of Great Britain, the assembly was confounded, the reader stopped short, and each man asked himself who this other Wilfrid was.[2] Then Boniface, an old counsellor of the Pope, who had lived in the time of Agathon, declared that the Wilfrid who was thus again brought to their bar was assuredly the same Wilfrid whom Pope Agathon had formerly acquitted and placed by his side as a man of irreproachable faith and life. When this was understood, the Pope and all the others declared that a man who had been forty years a bishop, instead of being persecuted in this manner, ought to be sent back with honour to his own country; and the sentence of absolution was unanimously pronounced.

Wilfrid is acquitted.

The Pope summed up and terminated the entire discussion in a letter to the two Kings of Northumbria and Mercia. After having reminded them

[1] See page 268.

[2] "Cum ergo causa exigente synodus eadem coram nobilibus et frequentia populi jubente apostolico diebus aliquot legeretur, ventum est ad locum ubi scriptum erat *Wilfridus Deo amabilis*, etc. Quod ubi lectum est, stupor adprehendit audientes: et silente lectore, cœperunt alterutrum requirere quis esset ille Wilfridus episcopus."—BEDE, v. 20.

of the sentence given by Pope Agathon, and described the regularity of the new trial over which he had himself presided, he enjoined Archbishop Berchtwald to convoke a council along with Bishop Wilfrid, to summon Bishops Bosa and John (who occupied the usurped sees of York and Hexham), and after having heard them, to end the differences between them, if he could; if not, to send them to the Holy See to be tried by a more numerous council, under pain, for the recalcitrants, of being deposed and rejected by all bishops and by all the faithful. "Let your royal and Christian majesties," said the Pope in conclusion, "for the fear of God, and for love of that peace which our Lord left to His disciples, lend us your help and assistance, that those matters into which, by the inspiration of God, we have fully examined, may have their due effect; and may the recompense of so religious a work avail you in heaven, when, after a prosperous reign on earth, you enter among the happy company of the eternal kingdom."[1]

Wilfrid returns to England. 705.

Wilfrid thus issued from what his friend calls the furnace in which God completed his purification. He and his followers thought themselves the victors; and although the sentence against his adversaries was neither severe nor definite,

[1] "Omnia quæque in scriptis, vel anterioribus, vel modernis, partes detulerunt, vel hic inveniri potuerunt, vel a partibus verbaliter dicta sunt, subtiliter inquisita, ad cognitionem nostram perducta sunt. . . . Vestra proinde Christiana et regalis Sublimitas . . . subventum faciat atque concursum."

the sequel showed clearly that it was all the state of the English mind could endure. It was even Wilfrid's desire, instead of availing himself of the Pope's decision, to remain in Rome and end his days in penitence. He obeyed, however, when the Pope and council constrained him to set out, forbidding him, at the same time, to continue the cold baths which he had every night imposed upon himself as a mortification; and after visiting for the last time all the sanctuaries which were so dear to him, he left Rome, carrying with him a new provision of relics and of rich sacerdotal vestments for the Saxon churches.

He made the return journey not on foot, but on horseback; which, however, was too much for his old age; and this new journey through Italy, the Alps, and France, added to his many travels, affected him so much, that he fell dangerously ill before reaching his destination. After this he had to be carried in a litter, and arrived, apparently dying, at Meaux. There he lay for four days and nights, his eyes closed, neither speaking nor eating, and in a state of apparent unconsciousness; his breathing alone showed that he still lived. On the fifth day he raised himself in his bed, and seeing round him a crowd of monks, who chanted the psalms, weeping, he said, "Where is my priest Acca?"[1] This

He falls sick at Meaux.

Acca.

[1] "Feretro portatus . . . tantum halitus et calida membra vivum demonstrabant . . . resedit, apertisque oculis vidit circa se choros psallentium simul et flentium fratrum. . . . Ubi est Acca presbyter?"—EDDIUS, c. 53; BEDE, v. 29.

was a monk of Lindisfarne, of great learning and fervour, and an excellent musician, who, though educated by one of the rivals of Wilfrid, the intruding bishop of York, had left his first master to follow Wilfrid for love of Roman orthodoxy, and had accompanied him to Rome on this last and laborious journey.[1] Seeing his master thus revived, Acca fell on his knees with all present to thank God. Then they talked together with holy awe of the last judgment. On which Wilfrid, having sent away all the rest of his attendants, said to Acca, "I have just had a vision which I will only confide to you, and of which I forbid you to speak until I know the will of God regarding it. A being clothed in white has appeared to me; he told me that he was the Archangel Michael, sent to tell me that God had spared my life in answer to the prayers and tears of my brethren and my children, as well as to the intervention of the Holy Virgin His Mother.[2] He added that I should yet live several

An addition of four years of life is granted to the prayers of his monks.

[1] "Doctissimus . . . castissimus . . . in ecclesiasticæ institutionis regulis . . . solertissimus, cantator peritissimus . . . deinde ad Wilfridum episcopum spe melioris propositi adveniens . . . cum quo etiam Romam veniens, multa illic quæ in patria nequiverat, Ecclesiæ sanctæ institutis utilia didicit."—BEDE, v. 20. Bede dedicated his *Hexameron* to Acca, who first became Abbot and then Bishop of Hexham after Wilfrid, and died only in 740. He has a place among the saints, and his miracles are told among those of Wilfrid.—*Act. SS. O. S. B.*, vol. iii. p. 204–220.

[2] "Visio mihi modo tremenda apparuit. . . . Adstitit mihi quidam . . . dicens se Michaelem archangelum."—BEDE, v. 19. It was to commemorate this intercession of the Mother of God that Wilfrid on his return to Hexham caused the Church of St Mary to be erected, of which some remains may be seen near the great church of the ancient priory; it was of a form quite new in England: "Ecclesiam construxerat opere rotundo,

years, and should die in my own country, and in peace, after having regained the greater part of that which has been taken from me." And in fact he did recover, and pursued his journey without any further hindrance.

He is reconciled to Archbishop Berchtwald.

As soon as he landed in England, he caused his return to be announced to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who, already informed by his envoys of Wilfrid's success at Rome, yielded to apostolic authority, was sincerely reconciled to him, and promised to pronounce the revocation of the decrees of the Assembly of Nesterfield. They had a friendly interview near London, in presence of a multitude of abbots from various monasteries of Wilfrid's party.[1] From London Wilfrid went to Mercia, but not to find his friendEthelred on the throne. The preceding year, in the very midst of Wilfrid's labours at Rome, his old friend had made up his mind to exchange the cares of royalty for the peace of the cloister, and had become a monk at Bardeney, in the monastery where his wife, Ostryda of Northumbria, assassinated seven years before by the Mercian lords, had, not without difficulty, succeeded in placing the relics of her uncle, the holy King Oswald.[2]

704.

quam quatuor porticus, quatuor respicientes mundi climata, ambiebant." —Ælredus, *De Sanctis Ecclesiæ Hagulstadensis*, c. 5.

[1] "Apostolica auctoritate coactus, et per nuntios suos directis scriptis territus et tremebundus, pacifice et sine simulatione (sicut rei eventus probavit) sancto pontifici nostro reconciliatus est."—Eddius. c. 54.

[2] See above, p. 123, the resistance of the Mercian monks to the religious practices of the Northumbrian king.

He visits his faithful friend Ethelred, now a monk at Bardeney.

Ethelred, who had as yet no saint in his own family, thus found a patron both powerful and popular in England, and even elsewhere,[1] in the family of his wife; and it was beside the relics of this venerated uncle that he decided to end his life after a reign of nearly thirty-one years. There Wilfrid sought him; and finding his old friend, his generous host, and faithful protector, clad in the same monastic habit as himself, and weeping for joy at his return, Wilfrid threw himself into his arms; and the two clapsed each other in this embrace in one of those moments of perfect union and sympathy which God sometimes grants to two generous hearts which have together struggled and suffered in His cause.[2]

675–704.

The bishop then showed the king the Pope's letter addressed to him, which contained the apostolic judgment, with the bulls and seals all in order. Ethelred, having read it, cried, "I will neither infringe it nor allow it to be infringed in the smallest particular while I live; I will support it with all my power." He immediately sent for his nephew, who had succeeded him on the Mercian throne, told him of the Pope's decision, and conjured him to execute it fully in everything connected with the Wilfridian monasteries in their

[1] In Friesland and Ireland.—BEDE, iii. 13.

[2] "Ad Ethelredum . . . semper fidelissimum amicum, nimirum pro nimio gaudio lachrymantem. . . . Mitissime eum salutavit, osculantes et amplexantes se invicem; honorifice ab amico more suo susceptus erat."—EDDIUS, c. 54. Cf. BEDE, v. 19.

kingdom. The new king promised willingly, with all the eagerness of a man already inclined to that mónastic life which he afterwards embraced in his own person.

But Wilfrid was not at the end of his troubles. Mercia had always been to him a friendly and hospitable country. It was a different matter in Northumbria. Ethelred advised him to send to Aldfrid two monks whom the king favoured, an abbot and the professor of theology at Ripon, to inquire whether he would receive Bishop Wilfrid with the verdict given at Rome. The king at first made an evasive answer, but on his second interview with these ambassadors, by the advice of his counsellors, he refused. "Dear and venerable brothers," he said to them, "ask what you will for yourselves, and I will give it you willingly; but do not ask anything in behalf of your master Wilfrid; he was judged in the first place by my predecessors in concert with Archbishop Theodore and their counsellors, and afterwards by myself, with the concurrence of another archbishop sent by the Holy See, and almost all the bishops of the country; so long as I live I will change nothing out of regard to what you call a mandate of the Holy See."[1]

King Aldfrid refuses to recognise the judgment of the Holy See.

[1] "Sicut consiliarii ejus persuaserunt. . . . O fratres, mihi ambo venerabiles . . . quia quod ante prædecessores mei reges et archiepiscopus cum consiliariis suis censuerunt, et quod postea nos cum archiepiscopo ab apostolica sede emisso . . . judicavimus: hoc, inquam, quamdiu vixero, propter apostolicæ sedis (ut dicitis) scripta, nunquam volo mutare."—Eddius, c. 55.

This speech sounds like an anticipation of the famous *Nolumus leges Angliæ mutare* of the English barons in the days of the Plantagenets.

Death of King Aldfrid. 705.

"As long as I live," said King Aldfrid; but he had not long to live. He soon after fell dangerously ill, and believed himself smitten by God, and punished for his contempt of apostolic authority. He openly confessed his sin against Wilfrid, expressed his desire to receive a visit from him before his death, and vowed, if he recovered, to conform to the desires of the bishop and the sentence of the Pope. "If it be the will of God," said he, "that I should die, I command my successor, whosoever he may be, in the name of the Lord, for the repose of my soul and his own, to make peace with Wilfrid."[1] Many witnesses heard these words, and chief among them his sister, Princess Elfleda, Abbess of Whitby, who, since the death of her other brother Egfrid, twenty years before, had been completely won to the interests of Wilfrid.[2] Soon afterwards Aldfrid lost the power of speech, and died. He left none but young children, and the Northumbrian crown descended to a prince named Eadwulf. Wilfrid, who had already returned to Ripon, and who, it is not known why, counted on the new king's favour, was preparing to go to him, when Eadwulf, by the

[1] "Præcipio in nomine Domini, quicumque mihi in regnum successerit, ut cum Wilfrido episcopo pro remedio animæ meæ et suæ pacem et concordiam ineat."—EDDIUS, c. 56.

[2] "Ælfleda abbatissa et sapientissima virgo, quæ est vere filia regis." —*Ibid.*

advice of his counsellors, and perhaps of the Witena-Gemot, which had misled Aldfrid, gave him to understand that if he did not leave Northumbria within six days, all his followers who could be seized should be put to death.[1]

His successor expels Wilfrid within six days.

But the prosperous days of Northumbria were over, and civil wars were about to destroy the order and prosperity which had reigned there since the establishment of national independence during the great reign of Oswy. Bernicia revolted in the name of the eldest son of Aldfrid. This was a child of eight years old, named Osred, who was already considered as the adopted son of Wilfrid.[2] By means of some mysterious influence, the nature of which is unknown, the aged exile Wilfrid, who had been expelled from the country for fourteen years, and was to all appearance forgotten, betrayed, and set aside, became all at once the master of the situation, and the arbiter of events.

He is himself dethroned, and replaced by Osred, son of Aldfrid.

He soon acquired a more powerful protector than the young sovereign in the person of an ealderman named Bertfrid, who was considered the most powerful noble in the kingdom, and who was at the head of Osred's party. King Eadwulf marched against the insurgents, and obliged them to retreat to the fortress of Bamborough, capital of the first

[1] "Persuasus a consiliariis suis. . . . Per salutem meam juro, nisi de regno meo in spatio sex dierum discesserit, de sodalibus ejus quoscumque invenero, morte peribunt."—EDDIUS, c. 56.

[2] "Regnavit puer regius . . . et sancto pontifici nostro filius adoptivus factus est."

Northumbrian kings, near the holy isle of Lindisfarne. Bertfrid and his men, shut up in the narrow enclosure of this fortified rock, were reduced to the last extremity, and not knowing what saint to invoke, they made a vow that, if God would deliver them, and give to their young prince the throne of his father, they would fulfil exactly the judgment of the Holy See regarding their aged bishop.[1] Scarcely had this vow been solemnly taken by the besieged when a change took place in the minds of their assailants. A number of Eadwulf's followers forsook him and came to an understanding with Bertfrid, who made a sally at the head of his garrison, by which Eadwulf was vanquished, dethroned, and himself exiled, after a short reign of two months over the kingdom from which he had brutally expelled the venerable bishop.

National assembly on the banks of the Nid.

As soon as the royal child was placed on the throne, the Archbishop of Canterbury made his appearance, perceiving that the time was come for executing the apostolic judgment, and definitely settling Wilfrid's affairs in a general assembly. This was held in the open air on the banks of the Nid, a river which flows a little to the south of the fertile plain in which Wilfrid's Abbey of Ripon was situated. The council was composed of the three bishops who shared among them the diocese of

[1] "Undique circumcincti hostili manu in angustiaque rupis lapideæ mansimus; inito consilio inter nos, si Deus nostro regali puero regnum patris cui concessisset, quæ mandavit sancta apostolica auctoritas de sancto Wilfrido episcopo adimplere, Deo spopondimus."—EDDIUS, c. 57.

Wilfrid, and of all the abbots and nobles of Northumbria; it was presided over by the archbishop, who had the king by his side. Wilfrid too was present, and met there his two powerful adherents, Bertfrid and the Abbess Elfleda. This noble and sainted princess, sister of the three last kings of Northumbria, and sister-in-law of two neighbouring kings, those of East Anglia and Mercia, was yet more influential on account of her virtues than of her birth. All the Northumbrians regarded her as the consoler and best counsellor of the kingdom. The archbishop opened the sitting with these words, "Let us pray the Holy Spirit to send peace and concord into all our hearts. The blessed Wilfrid and myself have brought you the letter which the Holy See has addressed to me by his hands, and which shall now be read to you."[1] He then read the pontifical decrees delivered in the different councils at Rome. A dead silence followed; on which Bertfrid, who was universally recognised as the first personage in the kingdom after the king, said, "We do not understand Latin, and we beg that you will translate to us the apostolic message."[2] The archbishop undertook the necessary translation, and made all understand that the

Abbess Elfleda and Count Bertfrid intervene in favour of Wilfrid.

[1] "Rex cum totius regni sui principibus et tres episcopi ejus cum abbatibus, nec non et beata Eanfleda abbatissa semper totius provinciæ consolatrix, optimaque consiliatrix . . . sedentibus in loco synodali. . . . Habemus, enim ego et beatus Wilfridus episcopus, scripta apostolica."—EDDIUS, c. 57.

[2] "Nos qui interpretatione indigemus."

Pope ordered the bishops to restore to Wilfrid his churches, or that all parties should go to Rome to be judged there, under pain of excommunication and deposition to all opposers, lay or ecclesiastical, even including the king himself.[1] Nevertheless the three bishops[2] (all of whom have places among saints) did not hesitate to combat this decision, appealing to the decrees made by King Egfrid and Archbishop Theodore, and to those of the Assembly of Nesterfield, under Aldfrid. At this point the holy Abbess Elfleda interposed: in a voice which all listened to as an utterance from heaven, she described the last illness and agony of the king her brother, and how he had vowed to God and St Peter to accomplish all the decrees he had before rejected. "This," she said, "is the last will of Aldfrid the king; I attest the truth of it before Christ." Bertfrid afterwards spoke in the name of the king, commencing thus: "The desire of the king and nobles is, in all things, to obey the commandment of the Holy See and of King Aldfrid."[3] He then related the history of the siege of Bamborough, and the vow which bound the consciences of the victors.

[1] "Si quis contemnens . . . sciat se, si rex sit aut laicus, a corpore et sanguine Christi excommunicatum: si vero episcopus aut presbyter . . . ab omni gradu ecclesiastico degradari."

[2] These three bishops were, Bosa of York, John of Hexham, and Eadfrid of Lindisfarne, bishop since 698.

[3] "Episcopi vero resistentes . . . beatissima Elfleda abbatissima benedicto suo ore dicebat: Vere in Christo dico testamentum Aldfridi regis. Præfatus regis princeps, respondens dixit: Hæc est voluntas regis et principum ejus."

Nevertheless the three bishops would not yield; they retired from the assembly to confer among themselves, and with Archbishop Berchtwald, but above all with the sagacious Elfleda. Thanks to her, and thanks also to the extreme moderation of Wilfrid, who required only the minimum of the conditions imposed at Rome, all ended in a general reconciliation. It was decreed that there should be perpetual peace and alliance between the Northumbrian bishops, the king, and the thanes on one side, and Bishop Wilfrid on the other; but that Wilfrid should content himself with his two best monasteries, and the large possessions attached to them—that is, with Ripon, where no new bishopric had been erected, and Hexham, into the see of which he entered; its late titular holder, John of Beverley, being, by a fresh concession made for the sake of peace, removed to York.[1] General reconciliation.

As soon as the treaty was concluded, the five bishops embraced, and received the holy communion together. The assembly dispersed amidst general rejoicing, which soon spread all over Northumbria. The most inveterate enemies of Wilfrid were glad of a peace which gave repose to their consciences. But the cloisters and arches of the Wilfridian monasteries echoed with the voice of a more enthusiastic gladness, receiving back again multitudes of disciples

[1] It is not known what the arrangement was in respect to Bosa, the intruding Bishop of York, who died most opportunely about this time.—Bede, v. 3. As to the bishopric of Lindisfarne, it remained in the hands of the new titular, Bishop Eadfrid.

and monks, some of whom had been dispersed by persecution and exile, some enslaved by detested masters, who hastened with delight to find themselves once more under the sway of a father whom all the world henceforth considered as a saint, and who had always possessed the faculty of inspiring a passionate affection in his children.[1]

This was the last act of Wilfrid's public life. It began in that famous assembly where the Celtic Church was bound by his youthful and vigorous influence to the feet of Roman tradition—an assembly which partook at once of the character of a council and a parliament, presided over by King Oswy, in presence of the Abbess St Hilda, and held at her monastery. He ended his career, after forty years of unwearied struggles, in another assembly of the same kind, held in presence of the grandson of Oswy, and influenced in the highest degree by another Abbess of Whitby, the gentle Elfleda, who was, like Hilda, a saint and a princess of that Northumbrian dynasty with the destinies of which those of Wilfrid were so intimately connected.

Influence of the Anglo-Saxon princesses over the destiny of Wilfrid.

It is impossible not to be struck by the great and singular influence exercised over the destiny of Wilfrid by women, or, to speak more correctly, by the Anglo-Saxon princesses whose contemporary

[1] "Reddentes ei duo optima cænobia . . . cum omnibus redditibus suis. . . . Et hæc est maxima beatitudo ex utraque parte, tam illorum . . . quam nostrorum, qui per diversa exsilia dispersi, tristes sub alienis dominis servi eramus, nunc enim . . . capite charissimo . . . gaudentes et exultantes in benedictione vivimus."

he was. It is a peculiarity found in the history of no other saint, and which few historic personages manifest to the same degree. Many, such as St Paulinus, St Jerome, St Augustin, St Francis d'Assisi, St François de Sales, St Jean de la Croix, have owed to their wives, their mothers, their sisters, and their spiritual friends, a portion of their glory and some of their best inspirations; but we know none whose life has been so completely transformed or modified by the affection or the hatred of women. He was protected in his youth and seconded in his monastic vocation by the granddaughter of St Clotilda, who then shared the throne of Northumbria; and it was by encouraging another queen of that country, St Etheldreda, to change her married life for that of the cloister, that he drew upon himself his first misfortune. A third Queen of Northumbria, whom he had indirectly aided to take the place of his spiritual daughter, Etheldreda, persecuted him for two years with a bitterness which she communicated to her sister the Queen of Wessex, and her sister-in-law the Queen of Mercia; and the three together uniting their efforts, used their influence with the kings their husbands to aggravate the distresses of the proscribed bishop, until the time when the Queen of the pagan Saxons of the South, herself a Christian, secured him an asylum, and offered him a nation to convert.

Those princesses who had forsaken the life of the world to govern great monastic communities were

not less mingled with his stormy career. The abbess-queen of Ely, St Etheldreda, continued to follow his counsels in the cloister as on the throne. St Hilda, the Abbess of Whitby, pursued him with an enmity as constant as the affection of her niece; while St Ebba, the Abbess of Coldingham, interfered in his favour, and delivered him from a painful captivity. It has just been seen how St Elfleda, the sister and daughter of the four Northumbrian kings under whom he had lived, after inheriting the crosier of St Hilda, came forward as the advocate and protectress of the prelate, contributing more than any other to his last triumph. Finally, he himself, when more than seventy years old, and on his deathbed, left his last vestments to her whom he called "his abbess," to Cyndreda, who owes her place in the history of the Church and the history of souls to this latest homage of the aged champion of Rome and of spiritual independence.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LAST YEARS OF WILFRID.—705-709.

Wilfrid's illness assembles all the abbots of his monasteries about him.—He divides his treasures: his farewell to the monks of Ripon.—His last journey to Mercia.—He consecrates the Church of Evesham monastery.—Bishop Egwin of Worcester and the smiths.—Vision of the three virgins in the forest.—Simon de Montfort, creator of the House of Commons, buried at Evesham.—Wilfrid narrates all his life to his successor Tatbert.—His death.—His funeral at Ripon.—His worship and his miracles.—He appears with St Cuthbert to relieve Hexham against the Scots: the Christian Dioscuri.—His banner appears at the battle of the Standard.—Services which he rendered to the monastic order, to the Church of England, to the universal Church, to the English nation. (Note on the Culdees of York.)—He begins that long succession of pontiff-confessors which has no rival out of the Church of England.—His character.

Wilfrid's illness gathers all his abbots around his couch.

WILFRID passed the four last years of his life in peace at his Monastery of Hexham, which had, though not by his will, become a cathedral and the seat of a diocese, the last of those of which he had been successively bishop.[1] As he travelled on one occasion from Hexham to Ripon, he was attacked by a sudden faint, even more serious than that which seized him at Meaux. He was carried into a house on the roadside, and there ensued a scene which proves the love with which he was regarded,

[1] York in 665, Lindisfarne 678, Lichfield 681, and Hexham in 705.

and how it was at once a bishop, a king, and a father whom his great and powerful monastic family was about to lose. At the first report of his illness all the abbots of his numerous monasteries, and even the anchorites who had gone out from his foundations, hurried to Hexham. Distance was no obstacle to them ; they travelled day and night, questioning every passer-by, and continuing their course with hastened steps or saddened hearts according as the answer they received told them that their father was yet living, or that they would arrive too late. It was the desire of all to see once again their master and beloved father, and to join their prayers and tears to those of the community, that he might be permitted to regain consciousness, and to put his succession in order by dividing his property, and naming the future superiors of all his houses ;[1] for his influence was everywhere so great that the monks had given up their right to elect their own chiefs, which was, however, one of the constitutional principles of the Benedictine order. Their prayers were heard. Wilfrid recovered ; but considering himself to have been thus warned that the time fixed by the archangel in his vision at Meaux would soon expire, he occu-

[1] "Cum intimo cordis mœrore . . . indesinenter diu noctuque canentes et deprecantes . . . omnes abbates ejus de suis locis et anachoretæ concito cursu pergentes . . . secundum traditiones hominum de morte ejus hæsitantes. . . . Ne nos quasi orbatos sine abbatibus relinqueret . . . ut et omnem vitam nostram in diversis locis secundum suum desiderium sub præpositis a se electis constitueret."—EDDIUS, c. 58.

pied himself in putting all his affairs in order, in preparation for his death. When he arrived at Ripon, he had the door of his treasury opened by the official who kept the keys, in presence of the two abbots of his monasteries in Mercia, and of eight of the most devout monks. It is curious to note the inexperience of the persecutors and spoilers of those remote times, which is shown by the fact that, after his two periods of exile, his condemnations, and his long absence, this treasury, left in the keeping of a few monks and often of unfriendly superiors, in the midst of a country whose government had been for thirty years at constant war with Wilfrid, still contained treasure enough to make up four large portions of gold, silver, and precious stones. "My dearest brothers," said Wilfrid to the ten witnesses of his last wishes, "I have thought for some time of returning yet once more to that see of Peter from which I received justice and freedom, to end my life there. I shall take with me the chief of these four portions for an offering to the basilicas of Santa Maria Maggiore and St Paul the Apostle. But if, as often happens to the old, I should die before accomplishing my wishes, I enjoin you, my faithful friends, to send these gifts to the churches I mention. Of the other three parts, you must divide one among the poor of my people for the salvation of my soul. Another shall be for the use of the two future abbots of Hexham and Ripon, and will enable them to conciliate the king

He proceeds to the distribution of his treasure.

and the bishops by gifts; and the last is for those who shared with me the long fatigues of exile, and to whom I cannot leave lands, that they may still have the means of living after my death." Here he stopped, overcome perhaps by emotion or fatigue; but after a while he resumed: "Remember that I appoint the priest Tatbert, my cousin, who up to this day has never left me, to be prior of the Monastery of Ripon, to take my place while I live, and to succeed me when I die. I do all this that the Archangel Michael may find me ready when my hour arrives; and I do not think it is far off." [1]

His farewell to the monks of Ripon.

When he had finished these arrangements, he caused the bell to be rung to summon his monastic family around him. When all the monks were assembled in the chapter-house, he entered, and sat down in the midst of them. "Your prior Celin," he said, "has for a long time laboured in all the duties of monastic life; I can no longer refuse him permission to return to the life of solitude and contemplation for which he thirsts. I exhort you to preserve scrupulously the regularity of your life until I return and bring you the person I judge worthy to be your superior. But if it please God that I do not return, take him who

[1] "Gazophylacium aperire clavicularío præcepit. . . . Alteram partem inter se dividant, ut cum muneribus regis et episcoporum amicitiam impetrare potuerint. Tertiam vero partem iis qui mecum longa exsilia perpessi laboraverunt. . . . Hæc statuta dico ut me Michael archangelus visitans paratum inveniat."—EDDIUS, c. 59.

shall be pointed out to you by these my fellow-travellers: make him your abbot, and pay him the obedience you have promised to God and to me." At these words, in which they foreboded a last farewell, all the monks fell on their knees weeping, and, bending their heads to the earth, promised to obey him. While they thus remained prostrate, Wilfrid blessed them, recommended them from the bottom of his tender heart to God, and departed, to see them no more.[1]

His last journey in Mercia.

The new King of Mercia, Ceonred, nephew of his old friend Ethelred, had invited him to visit and confer with him at once as to the state of the Mercian monasteries and of his own soul; for, drawn by the example of his uncle towards monastic life, he wished to consult Wilfrid before joining that uncle in the cloister. The aged saint obeyed this call, and, crossing the Humber for the last time, entered Mercia, where he visited one after another all the monasteries he had founded or adopted in that great kingdom, making everywhere arrangements similar to those he had made at Ripon to further the wellbeing and security of his different communities.[2] He even went in this

[1] "Pulsato signo tota familia Hryporum simul in unum congregata est . . . geniculantes lacrymantesque, inclinato capite in terram . . . proniique orantes . . . et ab eo die ultra faciem ejus simul non viderunt."—Eddius, c. 50.

[2] "Abbates suos omnes in adventu suo gaudentes invenit . . . et unicuique eorum secundum suam mensuram, aut cum terris vitam monachorum suorum augmentavit, aut cum pecunia corda eorum lætificavit."—Eddius, c. 61. To the various monasteries, the foundation of which

last effort of his old age to a district in which he had founded no monastic houses, into the country of the Wicciens, on the borders of the Welsh Celts and Western Saxons, to consecrate a Benedictine church just built at Evesham by the young King of the Mercians and Bishop Egwin.

Consecration of the Monastery of Evesham, founded by Egwin, Bishop of Worcester. 689.

The name of Egwin is worthy of a moment's pause in our narrative. He was a scion of the reigning dynasty of Mercia, and had been, in his youth, made bishop of one of the new bishoprics created by Theodore, at Worcester; but the post was a difficult one, and, notwithstanding his unwearied self-devotion, he did not succeed in purifying or regulating the morals of his flock. They would neither obey nor even listen to him. One day when he had preached against the habitual vices of the population, in a great forge situated in the depths of a wood, the smiths, far from ceasing their work, struck as hard as possible with their hammers on the anvils, so as to deafen him and drive him away.[1] His zeal for the strict ob-

by Wilfrid we have described, and the names of which are known, such as Hexham, Ripon, Peterborough, Ely, and Selsey, we ought to add Stamford, in the part of Mercia conquered by the Northumbrians, which was given to him on his first return from Rome to England, by his friend the young King Alchfrid.

[1] "Cum conflandi ferrum locus esset aptissimus, et fabris et ferri excussoribus maxime repleretur, gens incredula incudes malleis ferreis tanto strepitu continuo percutiebat, ut beati viri sermo non audiretur. . . . Præ concussione, immo confusione malleorum et incudum adhuc tinniebant ambæ aures ejus, ac si percutientes incudes eum sequerentur." —*Act. SS. O. S. B.*, t. iii. p. 322, and *Chronic. Abbatiæ de Evesham*, London, 1863, p. 26. The legend written in the eleventh century by a Prior of Evesham adds that the forge and its inhabitants were swallowed

servance of the marriage vow among these new Christians had above all irritated them against him.

To put an end to the persecutions and calumnies with which he was loaded, he determined to go, following Wilfrid's example, to justify himself before the Holy See. Though he did not admit the truth of any of the accusations brought against him, he yet remembered with confusion certain sins of his youth, and to expiate them determined to undertake this long journey with his feet loaded with iron chains, and, thus voluntarily fettered, entered Rome, where Pope Constantine did him entire justice.[1] Two years after his first pilgrimage he went again to Rome, from whence he brought back the Papal charter for the monasteries which a singular circumstance had determined him to build in a forest given him by King Ethelred. A swineherd, pushing his way through the tufted thickets of this wood, once came to a clearing where he

Vision of the three virgins in the forest.

up by an earthquake, and that since then no one has been able to exercise the trade of a smith on the site of the *castrum* thus punished, a story which suggests the following verse of Ovid—

"Pœna potest demi, culpa perennis erit;"

changing it thus :—

Culpa potest demi, pœna perennis erit.
Epist. ex Ponto, i. 64.

[1] "Peccatorum juvenilium quondam conscium."—GUILL. MALMESB., *De Pontif. Angl.*, lib. iv. p. 284. "Pedes suos vinculis ferreis astrinxit quæ clave poterant firmari ac reserari.—*Chron. Evesh.*, p. 6. The legend adds that the key of these fetters, which he had dropped into the Avon, a river of his own country, was found at Rome, in a salmon which had come up the Tiber. This miracle greatly contributed to the popular renown of St Egwin among the English of the middle ages, who, like their descendants, were great salmon-fishers.

saw three lovely girls seated, whose beauty appeared to him more brilliant than the sun ; the one in the middle held a book, and all three were singing celestial harmonies. Modern learning has supposed the locality of this vision to have been a place consecrated by Saxon superstition to the worship of the three Goddess Mothers, a worship which had struck deep root among the rural population of all the northern provinces of the Roman Empire, and which resisted the anathemas of the Councils longer than most other vestiges of idolatry.[1]

Egwin, when he was informed by the herdsman, went to pray humbly on the place of the vision. When his prayer was ended, he in turn saw the three virgins, one of whom, taller and infinitely more beautiful than the others, held, besides her book, a cross, with which she blessed him before she disappeared.[2] He recognised the Mother of the Saviour, and immediately resolved to build a monastery in her honour in that hitherto inaccessible spot. The new king of the country, godson and pupil of Egwin, seconded his master in this design, and gave him eighty-four *manses* or pieces of ground in the neighbourhood of the forest.

[1] Roach Smith, *Illustrations of Roman London.* The same author relates that Wolstan, a monk of Winchester, at the end of the tenth century, in his poem on the Miracles of St Swithin, has left a singular story of three nymphs or fairies who exercised their power in the forests of his neighbourhood.

[2] "Surgenti ab oratione tres virgines . . . apparuere, quarum quæ media eminebat præcelsior omnique nitore splendentior, aliis præfulgebat, liliis candentior, rosis vernantior, odore inæstimabili fragrantior. . . . Quum cogitaret hanc Domini Genitricem esse."—*Chron. Evesh.*, p. 9.

Consecration of the Monastery of Evesham.

On the very site of the great forge where the workmen had deafened Egwin with the noise of their hammers, and quite near the new monastery at Alcester, the Mercian parliament was convoked to give validity to the donations and privileges conferred on Egwin; and Wilfrid, as the great champion of the Benedictine rule in England, was appointed to preside at this solemnity, and to place on the altar he was about to consecrate the charter of endowment and freedom which had just been voted.[1] At the moment when he was about to accomplish, with his colleague Egwin, this solemn mission, in presence of all the people, he made the following prayer, which was immediately enrolled in the acts of the foundation :—

[1] "Ex mandato apostolico fuit sapientium conventus in loco qui Alneceastra vocatur . . . et Brythwaldus archiepiscopus ex ore omnium et terram loci et libertatem in carta descripsit. Tunc elegerunt sapientes ut dominus Wilfridus episcopus et ego privilegium idem ad locum eumdem afferemus. Eadem autem die . . . Wilfridus episcopus et ego . . . cartam et loci libertatem . . . super altare posuimus, et sic coram omnibus locuti fuimus."—*Chronicon Abbatiæ de Evesham,* edid. W. D. Mackay, 1863, p. 20. Cf. Pref. p. xviii. in the new collection of *Rerum Britannicarum Medii Ævi Scriptores.* It is needless to say that I do not quote the authority of the Rule of Pope Constantine in favour of Evesham, so cruelly turned into ridicule, together with so many other pretended Pontifical charters, by the formidable irony of Père Papebroch. (Bolland., vol. ii. April., p. 30, 31.) We may remark that the chronicler of Evesham has not dared to cite this bull at its proper date, that of the foundation, and only transcribes it in speaking of the suit decided by Pope Innocent III., Dec. 24, 1205, between the Bishop of Worcester and the Abbot of Evesham; the Pope, deceived by false documents, of which many were then fabricated, pronounced for the monastery. The monk Thomas of Marleberge, charged to plead the cause at Rome, and who has left us a very honest and animated narrative of the whole procedure, tells us that he fainted at the feet of the Pope when he heard the sentence read, partly from fatigue on account of the fast of the vigil of Christmas, partly for joy to feel that they were delivered from a *quasi-Egyptian* servitude.

"Lord God, who dwellest in heaven, and who hast created all things, save him who shall give peace and security to this place, and shall confirm the inheritance of God in that liberty in which we offer it to Him. For this reason, in the name of Almighty God and of all heavenly virtue, we enjoin that neither king, nor prince, nor minister, nor any man of what rank soever, shall have the audacity to rob this holy place, or to appropriate any part of it whatever to his own profit; that this place may always remain as we will it, consecrated to the use of the flocks and shepherds of God, and under the sway of its own abbot, according to the rule of God and St Benedict. But if—which God forbid!—any man, led astray by avarice, should contravene this institution, may he be judged before the tribunal of God, may he be forgotten by Christ, may his name be struck out of the book of life, and himself chained in the eternal pains of hell, unless at least in this life he does penance. As to him who shall respect and preserve this foundation, may God and all the saints have him in their holy keeping, and give joy to his soul in this life and happiness in the next."[1]

[1] "Domine Deus . . . conserva illum qui locum istum pacificabit et conservabit et hanc Dei hereditatem et hanc libertatem confirmabit quam Deo obtulimus. Nos etiam præcipimus . . . ut neque rex, neque princeps, neque minister, nec ullius ordinis homo, id præsumat ut locum istum sanctum diminuat aut sibi in privatam potestatem aliquid vindicet, sed sit locus hic, ut nos optamus, gregibus et Dei pastoribus ejusdem loci in usum, et bene dispositus in potestate proprii abbatis secundum regulam Dei et beati Benedicti. Si autem aliquis (quod

Egwin was buried in the monastery he had founded, the later annals of which are not without interest. Five hundred years afterwards it became one of the most venerated sanctuaries and most frequented places of pilgrimage in England, the bleeding remains of Simon de Montfort, the great Earl of Leicester, slain in the great battle fought under its walls, having been carried thither. This proud aristocrat retains a just eminence in history as having completed the establishment of the most famous political assembly of modern times—the British House of Commons—by calling together the representatives of the cities and boroughs, and seating them beside the knights of the shires. Although a victorious enemy of the throne, and condemned by the Pope, he won to his side the popular and religious sentiment of the nation. During his life, and long after his death, he was the idol of the English people, who gave expression to their passionate attachment for the champion of their rights in a mode adapted to the spirit of the time, by going to pray at his tomb, attributing to him numerous miracles, and by comparing this new St Simon to Simon Peter and Simon Maccabeus.[1]

Simon de Montfort buried at Evesham, 1265.

absit) avaritiæ spiritu arreptus vertere velit, judicetur ante tribunal Dei et nunquam in Christi veneat memoriam."—*Chron. Evesh.*

[1] There are seven pages of these pretended miracles in the Chronicles of the Monks of Melrose.—Cf. LINGARD, *Hist. Eng.*, vol. ii. p. 166 of the Paris edition; and FREEMAN, *Gentleman's Magazine*, Sept. 1862. Evesham has preserved nothing of the splendour of its ancient abbey, except one beautiful tower of the fourteenth century.

The consecration of this Church of Evesham, which was reserved for such memorable destinies, was the last episcopal function exercised by Wilfrid, the last act of that long life so entirely devoted to the extension of monastic life and the defence of the Roman Church. From the banks of the Avon he returned slowly to the neighbourhood of Ely and Peterborough, which had long been dear and familiar to him. During this last journey it occurred to him, as to the most illustrious monk of our own day shortly before his death, to tell the story of his life to a younger friend and faithful companion, who might be his witness to posterity. It was to his inseparable follower Tatbert, as he rode by his side, that Wilfrid thus gave, not a general confession, but a detailed narrative of his long life, with the certainty of having reached the eve of its last day.[1] Death, indeed, arrested him on his journey, at Oundle, in one of his monastic foundations near Northampton, which he had dedicated to St Andrew the Apostle, patron of that church at Rome, from whence the first English apostles had proceeded, and where he himself, the first of Anglo-Saxon pilgrims, had prayed on his first arrival.[2] His last illness was short, and his death gentle and without pain. He had only time to remind his companions of his former instruc-

He narrates his life to his successor Tatbert.

[1] "Omnem vitæ sua conversationem memorialiter prius enarravit Tatberto, . . . quadam die equitantibus per viam, quasi præsciens obitum suum."

[2] See above, p. 140.

tions, and to designate as his successor at Hexham that Acca who stood by him in his trial at Rome and during his mortal illness at Meaux.

When he had given them a last blessing, his head fell back upon the pillow, and rested there in calm repose, without a single groan or sigh. The whole weeping community chanted prayers around his bed. As they reached Psalm CIII. and the verse *Emitte spiritum tuum et creabuntur*, his breathing ceased, and he yielded up his soul to his Creator.[1] The aged soldier of God died more gently than an infant in the cradle. He was seventy-six years of age, forty-four of which he had been a bishop.

Death of Wilfrid. 23d June 709.

His funeral was celebrated with a mingled pomp and grief which can readily be imagined. Tatbert, his disciple, confidant, and successor, was also his chief mourner. Before the burial, and in obedience to the last affectionate injunction of the dying, he sent the shirt of the saint, still moist with his last sweat, to an abbess named Cyndreda, who had been converted by Wilfrid, who now governed one of the monasteries of his congregation,[2] and who had,

[1] "Cum quiete, non cum gemitu et murmure, caput ad cervical lectuli inclinavit et requievit."

[2] "Ad abbatissam sancti pontificis nostri, nomine Cynedryd."—EDDIUS, c. 62.

> "Interulamque puer sancti sudore madentem
> Corripuit, normatrici tulit atque beatæ
> Quam sibi flamineo sociaverat apte verendo
> Egregius heros, redimitim castificando."
>
> FRIDEGODUS, *Carmen de Sancto Wilfrido*, c. 55.

The holy Bishop Cuthbert, who died in 687, also sent his last garment to an abbess who had touched him by her pious devotion.

doubtless, like the Abbess of Coldingham and Whitby, distinguished herself by her fidelity to the exiled and persecuted pontiff. The body was carried to Ripon, and buried in the church which he had built and dedicated to St Peter, the apostle whom, along with St Andrew, he had most venerated.[1] Tatbert ordained that a special mass should be said for him; and that every year, on the day of his anniversary, the tithe of his flocks should be distributed to the poor, besides the daily alms which were given also by Tatbert's orders, for the soul of his dear master and for his own.[2]

His worship and miracles.

As soon as he was dead, Wilfrid appeared to the eyes of all in his true light, as a great saint and a great man. The popular veneration, restrained or disturbed during his life by the struggles of race, party, and opinion in which he had been engaged, found expression beside his tomb. Miraculous cures on earth, luminous apparitions in the sky; a supernatural power which protected the cell

[1] EDDIUS, c. 61 and 64.

[2] The beautiful epitaph which Bede has preserved to us, and of which he was probably the author, deserves to be quoted, at least in part:—

"Wilfridus hic magnus requiescit corpore præsul,
Hanc Domino qui aulam ductus pietatis amore
Fecit, et eximio sacravit nomine Petri,
Cui claves cœli Christus dedit arbiter orbis. . . .
Paschalis qui etiam sollemnia tempora cursus
Catholici ad justum correxit dogma canonis,
Quem statuere patres, dubioque errore remoto
Certa suæ genti ostendit moderamina ritus:
Inque locis istis monachorum examina crebra
Colligit, ac monitis cavit quæ regula patrum
Sedulus instituit: multisque domique, forisque
Jactatus nimium per tempora longa periclis,
Quindecies ternos postquam egit episcopus annos
Transiit, et gaudens celestia regna petivit.
Dona, Jesu, ut grex pastoris calle sequatur."

where he died from profanation and from the ravages of fire,—such were the first wonders which awoke the enthusiastic confidence of the Anglo-Saxons in this saint of their own race,[1] a confidence which, having once taken root, went on increasing, and shone out with redoubled intensity four centuries later under the first Norman kings. It was not only the blind, the infirm, the dying, and the shipwrecked who found occasion to rejoice that they had invoked the powerful intercession of the sainted Abbot of Hexham with God, but also many innocent victims of persecution, many outraged virgins, and whole populations desolated by the ravages of war or by the oppression of foreign conquerors.[2]

At Hexham, in honour of the sanctuary which he had created, and for so long a time inhabited, the right of sanctuary was allowed to extend to a great circle round the monastery, the great enclosure —a sanctuary not only for ordinary criminals, but, especially in time of war, for the neighbouring population, who took refuge there with their cattle, and whom the sword of the most cruel

[1] EDDIUS, c. 62, 63.

[2] See the curious narrative of Abbot Ælred of Rievaulx, entitled *De Sanctis Ecclesiæ Hagulstadensis et eorum Miraculis*, ap. MABILLON, *Acta SS. O. S. B.*, vol. iii. p. 204, 220, and RAINE'S *Priory of Hexham*. We may remark especially the incident of the young man unjustly condemned, who, at the moment of his execution, turned to the church of the saint, crying, "Adjuva nunc, Wilfride, quia si modo nolueris, paulo post non poteris." On which there arrived in hot haste two *fidejussores*, who gave security for him *more patrio*, and saved him. This story is cited by Palgrave as a proof of the utility of invoking saints and miracles against the iniquity of the law.

invaders dared not follow thither. The limits of this sanctuary were marked only by crosses erected at certain distances. The town which was soon after built close to the great monastery had no walls; the universal veneration for the memory of Wilfrid served it instead of ramparts. Nearly four centuries after his death, this veneration, and the confidence it inspired in the surrounding people, were expressed in a touching and truly poetic
1060-1093. legend. King Malcolm of Scotland, in one of his numerous and cruel incursions into England, irritated by the murder of his messengers near Hexham, ordered the sack of the town and a general massacre of its inhabitants. The Galloway Picts, the most ferocious of all the Scotch, were charged with the execution of this atrocious order, which was but too much in accordance with the spirit of the time. The tears and supplications of the intended victims had been as vain as the entreaties of the clergy to move the king from his purpose. On the eve of the day fixed for the massacre, the whole population, disarmed and desperate, fled to the church of Wilfrid, which resounded with their cries. At this crisis one of the principal priests of the town fell asleep from fatigue, and had a dream, in which he saw two bishops arriving on horseback from the south. These Christian Dioscuri[1] came at a gallop to announce to the unfortunate inhabitants

[1] This recalls the apparition of Castor and Pollux at the battle of Lake Regillus.

of Hexham that they were saved. "I am Wilfrid," said one, "and this is Cuthbert, whom I brought with me as I passed by Durham. We are come to deliver you. I have heard the weeping and cries of those who pray in my church. Fear nothing. At the dawn of day I will spread my net over the whole course of the Tyne, and no one shall be able to cross it to hurt you." Accordingly, in the morning a thick fog covered the whole valley. The messengers of the king lost their way, and when the fog dispersed the Tyne had risen so high that, there being no bridge, the Scots could not pass over. The husband of St Margaret saw in this the finger of God, and gave up his cruel design, and the inhabitants of Hexham were more and more convinced that the arm of Wilfrid was ever ready to defend them.[1]

He hastens with St Cuthbert to the aid of his town of Hexham against the Scots.

But it was specially at Ripon, where his relics reposed, that the universal faith manifested itself. Crowds came thither from all quarters, as if they expected still to find in bodily presence the aged saint who had feared neither man nor obstacles, and whose protection they invoked and even exacted

[1] "Rex vocat Gallowenses homines cæteris crudeliores. . . . 'Mox ut dies illuxerit, transeuntes flumen, irruite in eos. Non parcat oculus vester non ordini, non sexui, non ætati.' . . . Clamor ingens, ploratus et ululatus. . . . Et ecce apparuerunt duo viri . . . sedentes in equis. . . . Wilfridus vocor, et ecce hic mecum est sanctus Cuthbertus, quem transiens per Dunelmum adduxi. . . . Ecce, albescente aurora, extendam rete meum."—Ælred Rievallensis, *De SS. Ecclesie Hagulstad.*, c. 2, ed. Surtees. Cf. Pref., p. lx. Wilfrid is said to have come from Ripon, where his tomb was, and to have gone towards the north, passing by Durham, which is south of Hexham.

with blind trust and tender familiarity, against the iniquities of conquest, the abuse of power, and the unjust severity of the law.[1]

His banner appears at the battle of the Standard. 1138.

Fifty years after the deliverance of Hexham, the Scotch, under their sainted King David, reappeared in Northumbria, and committed horrors rarely equalled even in the barbarous wars of the period.[2] The alarmed population took arms under the leadership of the Archbishop of York, and of those Anglo-Norman barons who were most celebrated for the munificence they displayed in the monastic restorations of the twelfth century—the Bruces, Mowbrays, Percies, and Estoutevilles. They marched against the cruel invaders, and met them at some distance to the north of Ripon. The English were drawn up round a cart similar to that famous *carroccio* which the Lombards of the same period led into battle against the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa: on this humble pedestal, above a pyx containing the host, they had planted the banner of Wilfrid—*Wilfridi Ripensis vexillum*—between those of St Peter and St John. This cart, which they called the Standard,[3] gave its name to the battle, in which the King of

[1] "Ita ad eum in hac ecclesia quasi ad viventem confugerent, in omnibus necessitatibus quasi præsentem consulerent, in tribulationibus et angustiis ejus auxilium non tam peterent quam exigerent."

[2] See the contemporary historians quoted by Lingard, and above all the discourse of a bishop before the battle, omitted in the edition given by Twysden of the special account by Ælred, Abbot of Rievaulx, *De Bello Standardi*, but restored, after the manuscripts, by Raine, in *Priory of Hexham*, vol. i. p. 89.

[3] "Dicitur a standō Standardum, quod stetit illic militiæ probitas vincere sive mori."

Scotland and his ferocious army were completely routed. After the victory, they brought back to Ripon in triumph the banner of the saint, who had thus protected and saved his former diocese. The banner often reappeared at the head of battalions armed for the defence of the country.[1]

Of this enduring and touching popularity there now remains nothing but a shadow, a name, a meaningless word. In the modern town of Ripon, which has grown out of the great monastery founded by Wilfrid, the people have retained the habit of calling a certain Sunday in the year *Wilfrid's Sunday;*[2] but when they are asked why, it becomes plain that they know nothing either of the saint to whom they owe their municipal existence, nor of the Church whose apostle and champion he was.

What the work of Wilfrid was.

Happily for us, his work and his glory are inscribed in ineffaceable characters in the history of that Church, as well as of his country. His work was as varied as it was successful and lasting. Let us first remark its importance in respect to the monastic order.

Services rendered to the monastic order.

No one has done more for the extension and consolidation of that order in England, in the first place, by the introduction of the

[1] RICARDI HAGULSTADENSIS, *De Gestis Regis Stephani et de Bello Standardi*, ed Surtees, p. 91, 93.

[2] FABER, p. 204. There are no remains of Wilfrid's church, unless it be the crypt of the present cathedral, which is attributed to that period. In the time of Leland, a little before the Reformation, there were only three crosses, *antiquissimi operis*, on the site of the ancient monastery. One of the three spires of the church, rebuilt in the fourteenth century, bore the name of St Wilfrid. It was blown down by the wind in 1660.

Benedictine rule, then established only at Canterbury; and afterwards by charters and exemptions obtained from Rome, and from the Saxon kings and parliaments, in behalf of the great foundations of his time, such as Hexham and Peterborough; but above all, by the strongly woven links of intimate and active association between the numerous monasteries who regarded him as their head—a connection which gave them mutual security against the violence and usurpation of the princes and powers around them.[1]

In the year which followed his death, the first anniversary of his funeral brought together at Ripon all the abbots of the numberless monasteries which he had either founded, adopted, or received among his own communities. They came from the four corners of England, disturbed and anxious as to the situation in which the death of their venerable chief had placed them. "While he lived," they said, "we often had to suffer the violence of kings and nobles; but by his holiness, his wisdom, and the great number of his friends, he was always able to deliver us. We must now believe that he will be our protector in heaven, as are St Peter and St Andrew, whom he loved so much, and to whom he dedicated all his possessions, and all his followers." On the evening of this anniver-

[1] "In ipsis exiliis non otio deditus, sed cœnobiis et episcopatibus fundandis industrius. . . . Reliquit cœnobia quot nullus, quæ solus aggregaverat, multis dividens hæredibus."—WILL. MALMESB., f. 153.

sary, after supper, during the twilight of the long summer day, all the abbots, followed by the whole community of Ripon, went out to sing complines in the open air. There they saw the whole heaven lighted up by a great rainbow, the pale radiance of which proceeded from the tomb of the saint, and wrapt the whole enclosure of the monastery in light. Eddi, the faithful biographer of Wilfrid, was there, and saw with wonder this luminous circle. "We all understood," he says, "that the intercession of the saint was to be, by the goodness of God, an impregnable rampart round the vine of the Lord and His family; and the event has proved it, for since that time we have lived in safety, under abbots freely chosen by ourselves, and when some have been threatened, others have come to their help, and that throughout all England, north as well as south of the Humber."[1]

Our musician thus indicates, as it seems, that Wilfrid had succeeded in making, at least for a time, a first attempt at that association of different monasteries among themselves which many great monastic saints had dreamed of as the completion of the rule of St Benedict, and which is realised on so vast a scale in the orders of Cluny and Cîteaux.

[1] "Undique abbates ejus cum subjectis suis . . . ab oriente et occidente, ab aquilone et austro. . . . Quamdiu vixit optimum caput vitæ nostræ, frequenter a regibus et principibus tentationes sustinuimus, quibus . . . finem venerabilem semper imponere consuevit. . . . In crepusculo vespertino . . . candidum circulum totum cœnobium circumdans quasi per diem arcus cœli absque variis caloribus. . . . Nos vero adorantes laudavimus Dominum."—Eddius, c. 64.

Services rendered to the English Church;

To the Church of England Wilfrid did the immense service of securing the permanence of the episcopate. Proceeding in opposition to him, and by uncanonical methods, to partition the primitive bishoprics, Archbishop Theodore, his rival and enemy, established a new diocesan division, better adapted to the wants of the country. In addition to this, the same pontiff appointed the election of bishops to be conducted by popular assemblies presided over by the primate, at which deputies from the vacant church might be heard, and where the nominations of the king were discussed and controlled by the bishops and nobles; so that it might be truly said that, in principle, the choice of the bishops, as well as of the abbots, depended on the clergy.[1] But the power of the episcopate became rapidly so great, and its dignity so much sought after, that the elections were soon interfered with in an injurious and oppressive manner by the throne. Wilfrid opposed a far more efficacious barrier to this lay influence by resisting to the utmost the claims made by the kings to nominate, depose, or remove bishops at their pleasure, and by consecrating the principle of permanence and immovability in the episcopate as much by the support of the Holy See as by the national synods. Thanks to him, until the Norman Conquest, four centuries

[1] "Electio olim præsulum et abbatum tempore Anglorum pene clericos et monachos erat."—GUILL. MALMESB., *De Gestis Pontif.*, c. 3, f. 157. Cf. LINGARD, *Antiquities*, p. 91-96, 145.

later, no English king dared arbitrarily depose a bishop from his see.

To the Church universal;

To the whole Catholic Church he rendered the important service of fighting, overcoming, and destroying the exclusive spirit of Celtic Christianity. Without being in any way a revolt or protest against Catholic unity, without deserving at all that imputation of heresy or schism of which Wilfrid and his followers were too prodigal, this spirit might readily have degenerated into a sort of narrow and jealous provincialism. After having long repulsed the idea of communicating the benefits of the faith to the Anglo-Saxon conquerors of Britain, the Celtic Church reconsidered the matter, and the ice having been once broken by Roman missionaries, she took measures to supplant and eclipse them everywhere. But the Celtic apostles of England, no doubt without knowing it, by a series of pedantic details, isolated their new converts from the Church of Rome, the centre of Christian action, precisely at the moment when that Church, called by Providence to evangelise the immense family of Teutonic tribes beyond the Rhine and Danube, had the most imperative need of help from that Teutonic race whose mission St Gregory the Great had prophetically pointed out, and whom God had made the most active, the hardiest, and the most persevering of all barbarous races. England was about to become a mere ecclesiastical branch of Ireland, and her character in that case would have become doubly insular,

to the detriment of Catholic unity and the common interest of the Christian world. Wilfrid appeared: by a fifty years' struggle, and at the cost of his peace, his safety, and even his personal freedom, he first neutralised, and finally annihilated, the Celtic spirit, without at any time being guilty of persecution, coercion, or violence towards the vanquished. He did more than check the Celtic movement; he sent it back into chaos; he extirpated all the ritual and liturgic differences which served as a veil and pretext for the prejudices of race and opinion; he extirpated them, not only in his immense diocese, the vast region of Northumbria,[1] but throughout all England; and not in England only, but, by the contagion of his example and his influence, in

[1] A few faint vestiges of Celtic traditions and institutions are all that can be found in Northumbria at a later period. For instance, in 936, King Athelstane, as he marched against the Scots, solicited the prayers of the Culdees, *Colidei*, who served the Cathedral of St Peter: "Videns in dicta ecclesia viros sanctæ vitæ et conversationis honestæ dictos ad tunc *Colideos*, qui multos sustentabant pauperes, et modicum habebant unde viverent, concessit . . . ut melius possent sustinere pauperes confluentes, hospitalitatem tenere." This evidently refers to the Celtic *Celi-Dé*; and their existence at York in the tenth century must have dated back from the institutions of the Irish missionaries anterior to Wilfrid. It is apparent also, that according to the universal custom of Celtic as well as Benedictine monks, they combined the celebration of divine service with the care of the poor. Athelstane granted them, after his victory, "unam travam bladi de qualibet caruca arante in episcopatu York, quæ usque in præsentem diem dicitur Petercorn." These *travæ* had been given up to the king on the condition of his exterminating the wolves which destroyed "fere omnes villanorum bestias." The wolves killed, the rents remained available, and the king bestowed them on the *Colidei*. This gift, *largitione fidelium*, was confirmed by William the Conqueror and William Rufus, who transferred them and their rents to a hospital founded by the same *Colidei* at York under the name of St Leonard.—DUGDALE, *Monasticon*, quoted by REEVES, *The Culdees of the British Isles*, p. 59-144.

Ireland, in Scotland, and finally in the very sanctuary of Celtic Christianity, at Iona.[1]

To England.

Last of all, by himself converting the last of the conquering tribes which still remained pagan, that of the South Saxons, Wilfrid gloriously ended the conversion of England, which had been begun nearly a century before by missionaries from Rome. He did yet more. By his own pilgrimage, the first of his race, to knock at the door of the Vatican, and to pray at the tomb of the Apostles —by thus instituting pilgrimages and appeals to Rome—by obliging Saxon kings and bishops to acknowledge, in law and in fact, the intervention and supremacy of the Papacy,—he brought England into the orbit of that great movement of European civilisation of which the Holy See became gradually the pivot and the centre. It was he who completed and crowned the work of Gregory and Augustin. He placed the seal on the conquest of England by popes and monks. England owed it to him that she was not only Christian, but Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman. No other Anglo-Saxon exercised a more decisive and more sovereign influence on the destinies of his race.

Character of Wilfrid.

In modern England, all that Wilfrid did is destroyed, all that he loved has perished. He no longer lives except in history, where he has left, for every attentive observer, an ineffaceable trace.

[1] It will be seen further on how Adhelm, Egbert, and Adamnan finished Wilfrid's work.

By placing him upon her altars, the Church teaches us that by his devotion to justice, truth, and the good of souls, he has gained an eminent position among the saints. But in a purely historical point of view, his character and his career offer a study equally curious and interesting. We find in him no analogy with the great monks of the primitive Church, the solitaries of the Thebaïd, nor even with the solemn and mystic ascetics of Celtic Christianity. Though he was not insensible to the consolations and aspirations of spiritual life, the predominating features in his character are not those of an exclusively spiritual being, of a man of prayer and solitude; they are rather those of the man of action and movement, the soldier of religious life.

In Wilfrid begins that great line of prelates, by turns apostolic and political, eloquent and warlike, brave champions of Roman unity and ecclesiastical independence, magnanimous representatives of the rights of conscience, the liberties of the soul, the spiritual powers of man and the laws of God; a line to which history presents no equal out of the Catholic Church of England; a lineage of saints, heroes, confessors, and martyrs, which produced St Dunstan, St Lanfranc, St Anselm, St Thomas a Becket, Stephen Langton, St Edmund, the exile of Pontigny, and which ended in Reginald Pole. By a strange and touching coincidence, it is beside the tomb of this last Roman Catholic Arch-

bishop of Canterbury, in the cathedral, sprinkled with the blood of St Thomas the Martyr, that the relics of Wilfrid now rest, having been transferred to the church of the primacy in 959, to save them from the sacrilegious rapacity of the Danes.[1]

In addition to all this, Wilfrid was the precursor of the great prelates, the great monks, the princely abbots of the middle ages, the heads and oracles of national councils, the ministers and lieutenants, and often the equals and rivals of kings. When duty called, no suffering alarmed, no privation deterred, and no danger stopped his course; four times in his life he made the journey to Rome, then ten times more laborious and a hundred times more dangerous than the voyage to Australia is now. But, left to himself, he loved pomp, luxury, magnificence, and power. He could be humble and mild when it was necessary; but it was more congenial to him to confront kings, princes, nobles, bishops, councils, and lay assemblies, in harsh and inflexible defence of his patrimony, his power, his authority, and his cause.

He was never without adversaries, and as it has been justly remarked, he seems to have foreseen and practised that axiom of Rancé, which says, "A Christian should spend his money in buying enemies." But many of his enemies were saints; and of all the holy bishops and abbots of his time, so numerous in the Anglo-Saxon Church, not one was his

[1] Faber, p. 202.

ally, not one held out to him a friendly hand in his trials and combats. Many even showed a sort of inexplicable animosity against him. It must be concluded that he did not sufficiently consider the susceptibility of national sentiment, which was always so powerful among his countrymen, and which finally detached them from Catholicism. And in addition, while making the greatest possible allowance for provincial rancour and personal jealousy, it must be admitted that there was in him an unjust contempt for former generous services, a certain sickly irritability, a tiresome pertinacity in dispute, and a haughty and injurious violence of language;[1] but of language alone, for in his acts he was always tolerant and generous.

On the other hand, he had many friends. The monks who came spontaneously to range themselves under his crosier were counted by thousands; among them he found bold and faithful companions in all his travels, shipwrecks, dangers, and exiles: and these life-long followers were the same who prayed by his bedside with so many tears that his life might be spared. He inspired the most illustrious and most holy women of his race, Queen Etheldreda, the Abbess Ebba, and Elfleda, his last protectress, with an affection which vanquished all obstacles. He exercised over them, and over the most delicate and generous

[1] This is admitted by the most enthusiastic of his modern biographers, Father Faber, p. 203. Compare Hook, p. 138.

souls of his time, as well as over the savage Frisians and the dauntless Lombards, an irresistible influence; and this power lasted all his life from the time when, arriving at the Northumbrian court in the light armour of a boy, he gained the heart of Queen Eanfleda, until the last crisis, when the heroic Bertfrid, saviour of the Bernician dynasty, declared himself in favour of the aged exile.

This influence is explained by the rare qualities which more than redeemed all his faults. His was, before all else, a great soul, manly and resolute, ardent and enthusiastic, full of unconquerable energy, able to wait or to act, but incapable of discouragement or fear, born to live upon those heights which attract at once the thunderbolt and the eyes of the crowd. His eloquence, superior to anything yet known in England, his keen and penetrating intelligence, his eager zeal for literary studies and public education, his knowledge and love of those wonders of architecture which dazzled the Christian nation, and to which his voice attracted such crowds; his constancy in trial, his ardent love of justice,—all contributed to make of him one of those personages who sway and move the spirits of their contemporaries, and who master the attention and imagination even of those whom they cannot convince.[1] Something generous, ardent, and

[1] "Vir pro justitiæ merito multis jactatus periculis . . . egregie factus ad promerendam gratiam principum apud quos exularet, idemque pro rigore justitiæ compatriotis regibus odiosus."—WILL. MALMESB., f.

magnanimous in his nature commended him always to the sympathy of lofty hearts; and when adverse fortune and triumphant violence and ingratitude came in, to put upon his life the seal of adversity nobly and piously borne, the rising tide of emotion and sympathy carried all before it, sweeping away all traces of those errors of conduct which might have seemed to us less attractive or comprehensible.

He was the first Anglo-Saxon who secured the attention of other nations, and the first of whom a special biography has been preserved. In each detail, as well as in the general impression made by this biography, he appears to us a type of the qualities and singularities of his nation; of their obstinacy, courage, laborious and untiring energy, their dogged love of work and of conflict, their resolution to strive till death for their patrimony, honour, and rights. *Dieu et mon droit!* This proud English motto is written on every page of the life of Wilfrid. In the service of a cause which now, by the misfortune of the ages and the blindness of men, has become the most unpopular of all causes in the eyes of the English nation, Wilfrid displayed all the virtues which are most characteristic of his countrymen, and most fitted to attract

153. Eddi, who, like all the learned monks of his time, knew his Horace by heart, does not fail, like a parliamentary orator of the nineteenth century, to apply to his hero, in the preface to his biography, the well-known lines—

"Feriuntque summos
Fulgura montes."

Odes, ii. 2.

them. All the passions and all the noble instincts of his people palpitated in him. That mind must indeed be besotted by hatred, a thousand times blinder than ignorance itself, which does not recognise in him the eldest son of an invincible race, the first of the English nation.

BOOK XIII.

CONTEMPORARIES AND SUCCESSORS OF ST WILFRID, 650-735.

"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day."—1 THESSAL. v. 5.

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."—2 TIM. i. 7.

CHAPTER I.

ST CUTHBERT.—637-687.

Contrast between Wilfrid and the saints of the Northumbrian coast.—His glory eclipsed by that of Cuthbert.—Childhood of Cuthbert, a shepherd on the Scottish borders.—He becomes a novice at Melrose.—He evangelises the Scottish Marches. (Note upon the Monastery of Dull, cradle of the University of St Andrews.)—His austerities: his baths: legend of the otters.—He goes from Melrose to Ripon, from which he is expelled by Wilfrid, along with all the Celtic monks.—He becomes prior at Lindisfarne, where he establishes the customs of Rome and the Benedictine rule.—His life at Lindisfarne in its cloistral and in its external aspect.—His extreme modesty.—He becomes a hermit in a cave of the Isle of Farne.—Popular traditions concerning this portion of his life.—The birds of St Cuthbert, and the beads of his chaplet.—His charity towards the crowd of penitents who sought him there.—His hospitality.—His humility.—King Egfrid takes him from his rock to make him Bishop of Lindisfarne.—He continues both monk and missionary during his short episcopate.—His compassion for the sufferings of his penitents.—The mad countess.—The mother consoled.—His affection for his foster-mother, for Queen Etheldreda, and the great abbesses Ebba of Coldingham and Elfleda of Whitby. (Note upon the exclusion of women from his monastery.)—His last visit to the Abbess Verca.—He returns to his rock to die.—The abbess's shroud.—Last exhortations of Cuthbert: his death.—His closest friend dies at the same hour on the same day.—Their annual interview upon the rock of Farne.—Great and lasting popularity of his memory.—Translation of his relics to Durham.—Magnificence and wealth of that cathedral, after Toledo the richest in the world.—Right of asylum.—Efficacy of his protection to the oppressed.—Alfred, Canute, and William the Conqueror.—The independence, almost sovereign, of Cuthbert's successors under the Anglo-Norman monarchy.—He is invoked by the English against the Scottish invasions.—Battle of Neville's Cross.—His banner appears for the last time in the insurrection of the North against Henry

VIII.—It is profaned and burned with his body.—His popularity at sea.—The sailor monks.—Cuthbert, while a child, saw them like sea-birds on the waves.—His appearance to sailors in danger.—The hermit Ethelwold prays for the shipwrecked.—Grace Darling, the Christian heroine of these islands in the nineteenth century.

BESIDE the great figure of Wilfrid there appears in history an entire family of monastic saints, his contemporaries and countrymen, who should have found a place in the narrative we have just concluded, had it not been already too much prolonged. But although they were all inhabitants of Northumbria during the rule of Wilfrid, they form naturally into a group apart. This separation is due partly to the reserve, sometimes approaching enmity, which they manifested towards him, and still more to the essentially peaceful nature of their character and position. If in some cases they are found in contact with the struggles and agitations of their age and country, it is evidently against their inclinations. Their desire for peace, and ascetic and studious retirement, was as great as that of Wilfrid for the fatigues and hazards of the fight; and their history and aspect, retired as they were in their monasteries upon the coast of the Northumbrian kingdom, where the conflict between Wilfrid and the descendants of the Man of Fire was continually breaking out with fresh force, afford a pleasant and refreshing contrast to the stormy career of the great abbot.

Contrast between Wilfrid and the saints of the Northumbrian coast.

In the first rank of these peaceful men stands the monk honoured by the Church under the name

of St Cuthbert,[1] and whose glory soon eclipsed that of St Wilfrid, though the place he holds in history is of much inferior importance. Yes, great as was the influence of Wilfrid—a great bishop, a great abbot, the offspring of a noble race — his popularity was surpassed among his contemporaries as well as with Catholic posterity by that of a shepherd boy, who also became a bishop, and whose diocese was one of those produced by the division of that of Wilfrid. The Celts have claimed Cuthbert as belonging to them, at least by birth.[2] They make him out to have been the son of an Irish princess, reduced to slavery, like Bridget the holy patroness of Ireland, but who fell, more miserably, victim to

His glory eclipsed by that of St Cuthbert.

[1] His Life was first written by a monk of Lindisfarne during the reign of King Aldfrid—that is, before 705, less than twenty years after the death of the saint—and afterwards, both in verse and prose, by Bede, who had attained the age of fourteen when Cuthbert died, and who takes care to state, with his usual exactness, the names and profession of all who supplied him with materials.

[2] The Irish origin of Cuthbert is undoubtingly asserted by Reeves, in his *Notes on Wattenbach*, p. 5. Lanigan (vol. iii. p 88) states that Usher, Ware, and Colgan entertained the same opinion. There exists a Life of Cuthbert, translated from Irish into Latin, which was partly published, first in the collection of Capgrave, and afterwards reprinted by the Surtees Society in 1838, from a MS. much more full, but dating only from the fourteenth century. In this Life his mother is said to have been a daughter of the King of Leinster, whom the King of Connaught outraged and kept as his slave, after having slain all her family. Her child, whom she sent into Britain, was named *Nullhoc*—that is to say, *wailing*—because of the tears of his outraged mother. (Colgan, *Act. SS.*, ad 20 Mart.) Many other ancient authors, both Irish and English, pronounce him an Irishman. Bede makes no reference to his birthplace. The Bollandists, who reckon him among the Anglo-Saxons in the article devoted to him on the date of the 20th March, seem to count him as Irish in their Life of St Wiro, on the 8th May. Mabillon supposes him to have been born where he kept his sheep, on the banks of the Leader, but without giving any proof. Lanigan evidently inclines to the same opinion.

the lust of her savage master. They have also given him a place among the disciples of their great sanctuary in Iona.[1] His Celtic origin would seem to be still more conclusively proved by his attitude towards Wilfrid than by the constant tradition of the Anglo-Saxon monks of Durham. But, to tell the truth, nothing is certainly known either of his place of birth or the rank of his family.

Youth of Cuthbert.

His first appearance in history is as a shepherd in Lauderdale, a valley watered by a river which flows into the Tweed near Melrose, upon the borders, as now defined, of England and Scotland. It was then a district annexed to the kingdom of Northumbria, which had just been delivered by the holy King Oswald from the yoke of the Mercians and Britons. As he is soon afterwards to be seen travelling on horseback, lance in hand and accompanied by a squire, it is not to be supposed that he was of poor extraction. At the same time it was not the flocks of his father which he kept, as did David in the plains of Bethlehem ; it is expressly noted that the flocks confided to his care belonged to a master, or to several masters. His family must have been in the rank of those clients or vassals to whom the great Saxon lords gave the care and superintendence of their flocks upon the vast extent of pastures which, under the name of

A shepherd on the Scottish borders.

[1] "Una cum matre puer ad insulam, quæ Hy dicitur, profectus est : ubi aliquandiu cum religiosis viris loci illius conversatus est."—*Libellus de Ortu S. Cuthberti*, ed. Surtees, p. 79.

folc-land or commons, was left to their use, and where the cowherds and shepherds lived day and night in the open air, as is still done by the shepherds of Hungary in the *pustas* on both sides of the Danube.[1]

Popular imagination in the north of England, of which Cuthbert was the hero before as well as after the Norman Conquest, had thus full scope in respect to the obscure childhood of its favourite saint, and delighted in weaving stories of his childish sports, representing him as walking on his hands, and turning somersaults with his little companions.[2] A more authentic testimony, that of his contemporary Bede, informs us that our shepherd boy had not his equal among the children of his age for activity, dexterity, and boldness in the race and fight. In all sports and athletic exercises he was the first to challenge his companions, with the certainty of being the victor. The description reads like that of a little Anglo-Saxon of our own day—a scholar of Eton or Harrow.[3] At the same time a precocious piety

[1] "Ac statim commendans suis pecora quæ pascebat dominis."—BEDE, *De Vita et Miraculis S. Cuthberti*, c. 54. Cf. KEMBLE, *Saxons in England.*

[2] "Cum jocantibus satis jucundus apparuit. Quidam saltu, alii luctamine . . . nonnulli vertice capitis in terram depresso, pede utroque in sublime porrecto, se subrigere decertabant."—*Ibid.*, p. 80.

[3] "Omnes coætaneos in agilitate et petulantia superans."—MONACH. LINDISFARN., ap. BOLLAND., t. iii. Martii, p. 118. "Agilis natura . . . acutus ingenio . . . fessis nonnunquam aliis, ille indefessus, si quis ultra secum vellet certare, quasi victor lætabundus inquireret. Sive enim saltu, sive cursu, sive luctatu, sive quolibet alio membrorum sinuamine . . . ille omnes æquævos et nonnullos etiam majores a se gloriabatur

showed itself in him, even amid this exuberance of youth. One night, as he said his prayers, while keeping the sheep of his masters, he saw the sky, which had been very dark, broken by a track of light, upon which a crowd of angels descended from heaven, returning afterwards with a resplendent soul which they had gone to meet on earth.[1] Next morning he heard that Aïdan, the holy Bishop of Lindisfarne, the apostle of the district, had died during the night. This vision determined his monastic vocation.

He becomes a novice at Melrose.

Some time afterwards we find him at the gates of the Monastery of Melrose, the great Celtic establishment for novices in Northumbria. He was then only fifteen, yet nevertheless he arrived, like Wilfrid at the court of Queen Eanfleda, on horseback, lance in hand, attended by a squire; for he had already begun his career in the battle-field, and learned in the face of the enemy the first lessons of abstinence, which he now meant to practise in the cloister.[2] He was received by two great doctors of the Celtic Church—the abbot Eata, one of the twelve Northumbrians first chosen by Aïdan, and the prior Boswell, who conceived a special affection for the

esse superatos."—BEDE, *De Vita et Miraculis S. Cuthberti*, c. 1. Cf. c. 6.

[1] "Vidit subito fusum de cœlo lumen medias largæ noctis interrupisse tenebras. In quo cœlestium choros agminum terram petisse."—BEDE, c. 4.

[2] "In castris contra hostem cum exercitu sedens, ibique habens stipendia parva."—BOLLAND., p. 118. "Cum equo desilisset et hastam quam tenuerat manu ministro dedisset."—BEDE, c. 6.

new-comer, and undertook the charge of his monastic education. Five centuries later, the copy of the Gospels in which the master and pupil had read daily was still kissed with veneration in the Cathedral of Durham.

The robust and energetic youth very soon showed the rarest aptitude for monastic life, not only for cenobitical exercises, but, above all, for the missionary work, which was the principal occupation of monks in that country and period. He was not content merely to surpass all the other monks in his devotion to the four principal occupations of monastic life—study, prayer, vigils, and manual labour[1]—but specially applied himself to the work of casting out from the hearts of the surrounding population the last vestiges of pagan superstition. Not a village was so distant, not a mountain-side so steep, not a cottage so poor, that it escaped his zeal. He sometimes passed weeks and even months out of his monastery, preaching to and confessing the rustic population of these mountains.[2]

His missionary life.

The roads were very bad, or rather there were no roads; only now and then was it possible to travel on horseback; sometimes, when his course lay along the coast of the districts inhabited by the

[1] "Legendi videlicet, orandi, vigilandi, atque operandi solertior."—BEDE, *Vita S. Cuthb.*, c. 6.

[2] "Solebat ea maxime loca peragrare, illis prædicare in viculis, qui in arduis asperisque montibus procul positi, aliis horrori erant ad visendum, et paupertate pariter ac rusticitate sua, doctorum prohibebant accessum. . . . In montanis plebem rusticam."—BEDE, *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 9.

Picts, he would take the help of a boat.[1] But generally it was on foot that he had to penetrate into the glens and distant valleys, crossing the heaths and vast table-lands uncultivated and uninhabited, where a few shepherds' huts, like that in which he himself had passed his childhood, and which were in winter abandoned even by the rude inhabitants, were thinly scattered. But neither the intemperance of the seasons, nor hunger, nor thirst, arrested the young and valiant missionary in his apostolic travels, to seek the scattered population, half Celts and half Anglo-Saxons, who, though already Christian in name and by baptism, retained an obstinate attachment to many of their ancient superstitions, and who were quickly led back by any great calamity, such as one of the great pestilences which were then so frequent, to use of magic, amulets, and other practices of idolatry.[2]

He evangelises the country between the Solway and the Forth.

The details which have been preserved of the wonders which often accompanied his wanderings show that his labours extended over all the hilly district between the two seas—from the Solway

[1] "Cum duobus fratribus pergens et navigans ad terram Pictorum, ubi Mudpieralegis (?) prospere pervenerunt."—Boll., p. 119. "Ad terram Pictorum qui Nidwari vocantur."—Bede, c. 11. The late Mr Joseph Robertson, one of the greatest antiquarians in Scotland, who kindly exerted himself to enlighten me upon the principal difficulties of the history of Cuthbert, supposed this place to be Newburn, near Largo, in the county of Fife.

[2] "Ecce, inquit, in itinere quo vadis, nullum viculum, nulla hominum habitacula reperies. . . . Tuguria pastorum quæ, æstate infirmiter posita, tunc jam deserta patebant. . . . Aliquoties equo sedere at sæpius pedes. . . . Ad erronea idololatriæ medicamina currebant . . . per incanta-

to the Forth.[1] They explain to us how the monks administered the consolations and the teachings of religion, before the organisation of parishes, ordained by Archbishop Theodore, had been everywhere introduced or regulated. As soon as the arrival of one of these apostolic missionaries in a somewhat central locality was known, all the population of the neighbourhood hastened to hear him, endeavouring with fervour and simplicity to put in practice the instruction they received from him. Cuthbert especially was received among them with affectionate confidence: his eloquence was so persuasive that it brought the most rebellious to his feet to hear their sins revealed to them, and to accept the penance which he imposed upon them.[2]

His austerities.

Cuthbert prepared himself for preaching and the administration of the sacraments by extraordinary penances and austerities. Stone bathing-places, in which he passed the entire night in prayer, lying

tiones vel alligaturas vetata quælibet dæmoniacæ artis arcana."—*Vita*, c. 5, 9. BOLLAND., p. 119, 120.

[1] It would even appear that the sphere of his operations extended much farther north, for the *Libellus de Ortu S. Cuthberti*, written in the Irish tongue, a Latin version of which has been published by the Surtees Society, mentions a stone cross raised by him when he left the Monastery of Dull, in the district of Athole, close to Taymouth. This monastery, which is celebrated in the annals of the Celtic Church, was the cradle of the University of St Andrews. In the eleventh century it had for Coarb or Combarba—that is, for lay and hereditary abbot—the ancestor of the royal house of the Stuarts.

[2] "Erat quippe moris eo tempore populis Anglorum, ut veniente in villam clerico vel presbytero, cuncti ad ejus imperium verbum audituri confluebant. . . . Cudbercto tanta erat dicendi peritia, tantus amor persuadendi."—*Vita*, c. 9.

in the frozen water, according to a custom common among the Celtic saints, and which Wilfrid himself, as has been seen, had borrowed from them, are still shown in several different places.[1] When he was near the sea, he went to the shore, unknown to any one, at night, and, plunging into the waves up to his neck, sang his vigils there. As soon as he came out of the water he resumed his prayers on the sand of the beach. On one occasion, one of his disciples, who had followed him secretly in order to discover the aim of this nocturnal expedition, saw two otters come out of the water, which, while the saint prayed on his knees, licked his frozen feet and wiped them with their hair until life and warmth returned to the benumbed members.[2] By one of those strange caprices of human frivolity which disconcert the historian, this insignificant incident is the only recollection which now remains in the memory of the people. St Cuthbert is known to the peasant of Northumberland and of the Scottish borders only by the legend of those compassionate otters, even as the name of Columba recalls to the mariners of the Hebrides only the history of the

The legend of the otters.

[1] "Vas quoddam balnearium de lapide integro sibi fabricavit . . . quod vas adhuc in montis vertice permanet."—*Libellus*, c. 25. See above, p. 80, the history of Drychthelme, the penitent of Melrose, and for Wilfrid, p. 223.

[2] "Homo Dei obstinata mente . . . in mediis fluctibus et mari aliquando usque ad ascellas tumultuante et fluctuante tinctus est. . . . Venere continuo de profundo maris quadrupedæ quæ vulgo lutræ vocantur. . . . Hæ . . . anhelitu suo pedes ejus fovere cœperunt . . . lambentes pedes, volutantes tergebant pellibus suis, et calefacientes odoribus suis."—Boll., p. 119. Bede, c. 40.

tired crane, which he sent back to Ireland, its native country.

He had been for some years at Melrose, when the Abbot Eata took him along with him to join the community of Celtic monks established by King Alchfrid at Ripon. Cuthbert held the office of steward: and in this office showed the same zeal as in his missions. When travellers arrived through the snow, famished and nearly fainting with cold, he himself washed their feet and warmed them against his bosom,[1] then hastened to the oven to order bread to be made ready if there was not enough. It may be perhaps remembered that the sons of Melrose had to give place to Wilfrid, when he, at the commencement of his campaign in favour of the Roman ritual and paschal unity, attempted to compel the Celtic colony of Ripon to give up their national customs.[2] It was a great and sudden storm, said Bede, with the prudent reserve which he observes in all that relates to the struggles between Wilfrid and other saints. Cuthbert returned with his countrymen to Melrose, resumed his life of missionary preaching, and again met his friend and master, the prior Boswell, at whose death in the great pestilence of 664[3] Cuthbert was elected abbot in his place. He had been himself attacked by the dis-

He is sent from Melrose to Ripon. 660.

[1] See the Legend of the Angel.— *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 7.

[2] See above, p. 147, "Instante subito turbine, præfatus abbas cum Cuthberto et cæteris . . . domum repulsus est."—BEDE, c. 8.

[3] See above, p. 180.

ease; and all the monks prayed earnestly that his life might be preserved to them. When he knew that the community had spent the night in prayer for him, though he felt no better, he cried to himself, with a double impulse of his habitual energy, "What am I doing in bed? It is impossible that God should shut His ears to such men. Give me my staff and my shoes." And getting up, he immediately began to walk, leaning upon his staff. But this sudden cure left him subject to weakness which shortened his life.[1]

He is transferred to Lindisfarne.

However, he had not long to remain at Melrose.[2] The triumph of Wilfrid and the Roman ritual at the Conference of Whitby brought about a revolution in the monastic metropolis of Northumbria, and in the mother monastery of Melrose at Lindisfarne. Bishop Colman, as has been seen, had returned to Iona, carrying with him the bones of his predecessor, the first apostle of the country, and followed by all the monks who would not consent to sacrifice their Celtic traditions to Roman unity.

[1] "Utquid jaceo? . . . Date baculum et caligas. Statimque exurgens, cœpit tentare incessum baculo innitens."—*Vita*, c. 8.

[2] It is difficult to reconcile the *per aliquot annos* of Bede (c. 9) with the precise dates assigned by Simeon of Durham, or rather Turgott, the official historian of the diocese, who recognised Cuthbert as his patron—dates which are drawn from a comparison of the most ancient records. The Bollandists, agreeing with Simeon, fix in 664, the year of Boswell's death, and consequently the first year of Cuthbert's priorate, his translation to Lindisfarne. The chronology of his life is simple enough. He was born in 637, became a monk at Melrose in 651, prior at Lindisfarne in 664, an anchorite at Farne in 676, bishop in 684. He abdicated in 686, and died in 687.

It was of importance to preserve the holy island, the special sanctuary of the country, for the religious family of which its foundress had been a member. Abbot Eata of Melrose undertook this difficult mission. He became Abbot of Lindisfarne, and was invested with that kind of episcopal supremacy which has been already described, and which on Wilfrid's first downfall was to change into a full episcopate. He took with him the young Cuthbert, who was not yet thirty, but whom, however, he held alone capable of filling the important office of prior in the great insular community.

The struggle into which Eata and Cuthbert, in their proper persons, had entered against Wilfrid on the subject of Roman rites—a struggle to which they had themselves been victims at Ripon—did not point them out as the best men to introduce the novelties so passionately defended and insisted upon by the new Bishop of Northumbria. Notwithstanding, everything goes to prove that the new abbot and prior of Lindisfarne adopted without reserve the decisions of the Assembly of Whitby, and took serious pains to introduce them into the great Celtic community. Cuthbert, in whom the physical energy of a robust organisation was united to an unconquerable gentleness, employed in this task all the resources of his mind and heart. All the rebels had not left with Bishop Colman; some monks still remained who held obstinately by their ancient customs. Cuthbert

reasoned with them daily in the meetings of the chapter; his desire was to overcome their objections by patience and moderation alone: he bore their reproaches as long as that was possible; and when his endurance was at an end, raised the sitting without changing countenance or tone, and resumed next morning the course of the debate without ever permitting himself to be moved to anger, or allowing anything to disturb the inestimable gift of kindness and lightheartedness which he had received from God.[1]

He insists upon uniformity in monastic discipline.

It was not only the orthodox Eastern and other liturgical observances which he had to make acceptable to the monks of Lindisfarne. The difficulty of establishing in his monastery that regularity and uniformity which become monastic life was not less great. Was it the Benedictine rule in all its purity, such as Augustin had brought into Canterbury, and which Wilfrid at that very moment was labouring to communicat to Northumbria, which Cuthbert desired to introduce at Lindisfarne? The opinions of the most competent authorities are divided in respect to this.[2] Every-

[1] "Erant in monasterio fratres qui priscæ suæ consuetudini quam regulari mallent obtemperare custodiæ, quos . . . modesta patientiæ suæ virtute superabat et quotidiano exercitio . . . paulatim convertebat. . . . Sæpius in cœtu fratrum de regula disputans, cum acerrimis contradicentium fatigaretur injuriis . . . placido vultu atque animo egrediens. . . . Erat namque vir ad perferenda fortiter omnia quæ vel animo vel corpore adversa ingerebantur invictissimus, nec minus inter tristia quæ contigissent faciem prætendens hilarem."—*Vita*, c. 46. "Omni hora hilaris et lætus."—*Monach. Lindisf.*, p. 121.

[2] Mabillon maintains the affirmative in opposition to the Bollandists

thing leads us to believe that the young and holy prior was desirous of adding to the rule of St Benedict certain special customs justified by the habits and necessities of the Northumbrian climate and people. But his great desire was the strict observance of the rule when once established; and his historian boasts as one of his most remarkable victories the obligation he imposed for ever upon the monks of Lindisfarne of wearing a simple and uniform dress, in undyed wool, and thus giving up the passionate liking of the Anglo-Saxons for varied and brilliant colours.[1]

His life both in the cloister

During the twelve years which he passed at Lindisfarne, the life of Cuthbert was identical with

(p. 96 and 115), which latter go so far as to believe that the troubles which ensued on Wilfrid's arrival at Lindisfarne to replace Cuthbert as bishop, and of which Bede (see above, page 303) speaks so mysteriously, were caused by his attempt to introduce the rule of St Benedict in place of the observances followed and recommended by Cuthbert. The opinion of Mabillon is founded chiefly on these words of the Lindisfarne monk: "Nobis regularem vitam primum componens constituit, quam usque hodie cum Regula Benedicti observamus." The Bollandists recognise the trace of a modern interpolation in the narrative of this monk, where he says that Cuthbert received on his entrance at Melrose "tonsuræ Petri formam, in modum coronæ spineæ caput Christi cingentis," whereas it is known that Melrose was the citadel of the Celtic tonsure. Let us acknowledge, in passing, that whatever was the rule established by Cuthbert, the saint, himself so austere, softened its regulations greatly for his monks, since we see that he recommended, and even enjoined them to eat a fat goose, upon which Mabillon adds, "Nec mirum si monachi illi anserina carne vescebantur, qui jam tum forsitan volatilia in piscium numero habebant." Finally, we observe that the use of wine was perfectly admitted among the companions of Cuthbert, and that they seem to have been connoisseurs in this matter.

[1] "Ut neque munditiis neque sordibus esset notabilis, ne quis varii aut pretiosi coloris habeat indumentum, sed ea maxime specie quam naturalis ovium lana ministrat."—*Vita*, c. 16.

and in the world at Lindisfarne. 664-676.

that which he had led at Melrose. Within doors, this life was spent in the severe practice of all the austerities of the cloister, in manual labour united to the punctual celebration of divine worship, and such fervour in prayer that he often slept only one night in the three or four, passing the others in prayer, and in singing the service alone while walking round the aisle to keep himself awake. Outside, the same zeal for preaching, the same solicitude for the salvation and wellbeing, temporal as well as spiritual, of the Northumbrian people, was apparent in him. He carried to them the word of life; he soothed their sufferings by curing miraculously a crowd of diseases which were beyond the power of the physicians—a class which does not seem to have been wanting among the Anglo-Saxons of this period, as they are mentioned almost at every page of their miraculous records. But the valiant missionary specially assailed the diseases of the soul, and made use of all the tenderness and all the ardour of his own spirit to reach them. When he celebrated mass before the assembled crowd, his visible emotion, his inspired looks, his trembling voice, all contributed to penetrate and overpower the multitude. The Anglo-Saxon Christians who came in crowds to open their hearts to him in the confessional, were still more profoundly impressed: though he was a bold and inflexible judge of impenitent vice, he felt and expressed the tenderest compassion for the contrite sinner. He

was the first to weep over the sins which he pardoned in the name of God; and he himself fulfilled the penances which he imposed as the condition of absolution, thus gaining by his humility the hearts which he longed to convert and cure.[1]

He becomes an anchorite in the desert island of Farne. 676.

But neither the life of a cenobite nor the labours of a missionary could satisfy the aspirations of his soul after perfection. When he was not quite forty, after holding his priorship at Lindisfarne for twelve years, he resolved to leave monastic life, and to live as a hermit in a sterile and desert island, visible from Lindisfarne, which lay in the centre of the archipelago, south of the holy isle, and almost opposite the fortified capital of the Northumbrian kings at Bamborough.[2] No one dared to live on this island, which was called Farne, in consequence of its being supposed the haunt of demons. Cuthbert took possession of it as a soldier of Christ, victorious over the tyranny of evil, and built there a palace worthy of himself, hollowing out of the living rock a cell from which he could see nothing but the sky, that he might not be disturbed in his contemplations. The hide of an ox suspended be-

[1] "Circuibat insulam, . . . pariter et longitudinem psalmodiæ ac vigiliarum incedendo alleviabat . . . Circumquaque morantem vulgi multitudinem more suo crebra visitatione ad cœlestia quærenda et promerenda succendebat. . . . Spiritu mansuetudinis modestus ad ignoscendum pœnitentibus, ita ut nonnunquam confitentibus sibi peccata sua his qui deliquerant, prior ipse miserans infirmos, lacrymis funderet, et quid peccatori agendum esset, ipse justus suo præmonstraret exemplo."—*Vita*, c. 16.

[2] A minute description and plan of this island, now inhabited and crowned by two lighthouses, will be found in the *History of St Cuthbert*, by Mgr. Eyre; London, 1858.

fore the entrance of his cavern, and which he turned according to the direction of the wind, afforded him a poor defence against the intemperance of that wild climate. His holy historian tells us that he exercised sway over the elements and brute creation as a true monarch of the land which he had conquered for Christ, and with that sovereign empire over nature which sin alone has taken from us.[1] He lived on the produce of a little field of barley, sowed and cultivated by his own hands, but so small that the inhabitants of the coast reported among themselves that he was fed by angels with bread made in paradise.

Popular traditions respecting his sojourn at Farne.

The legends of Northumbria linger lovingly upon the solitary sojourn of their great national and popular saint in this basaltic isle. They attribute to him the extraordinary gentleness and familiarity of a particular species of aquatic birds which came when called, allowed themselves to be taken, stroked, and caressed, and whose down was of remarkable softness. In ancient times they swarmed about this rock, and they are still to be found there, though much diminished in number since curious visitors have come to steal their nests and shoot the birds. These seafowl are found nowhere else

[1] "Miles Christi, devicta tyrannorum acie, monarchus terræ, quam adierat, factus est. . . . Condidit civitatem suo aptam imperio . . . vivam cædendo rupem. . . . Qui enim Auctori omnium creaturarum fideliter et integro corde famulatur, non est mirandum si ejus imperiis ac votis omnis creatura deserviat. At nos plerumque idcirco subjectæ nobis creaturæ dominum perdimus, quia Domino et Creatori omnium ipsi servire negligimus."—*Vita*, c. 17, 21.

in the British Isles, and are called the *Birds of St Cuthbert.*[1] It was he, according to the narrative of a monk of the thirteenth century, who inspired them with a hereditary trust in man, by taking them as the companions of his solitude, and guaranteeing to them that they should never be disturbed in their homes.[2]

It is he, too, according to the fishers of the surrounding islands, who makes certain little shells of the genus *Entrochus*, which are only to be found on this coast, and which have received the name of St Cuthbert's Beads. They believe that he is still to be seen by night seated on a rock, and using another as an anvil for his work. This tradition, like many others, has been consecrated by Sir Walter Scott in the poetic picture which he has drawn of the Northumbrian coast, between the two great monasteries of Whitby and Lindisfarne.[3]

[1] Eider or Cuthbert-Ducks,—the *Oie à duvet* of Buffon, the *Anas mollissima* of Linnæus.

[2] "Aves illæ B. Cuthberti specialiter nominantur. . . . Ipse, adhuc vivens, avibus illis firmam pacem et quietem in patribus suis dederat. . . . Quod patribus avium antiquitus dederat, hoc, de illarum genere pullis procreandis, et filiis hereditarie in pacis et misericordiæ custodia perpetuis temporibus conservando præstabat. . . . Dum solitarius in rupe secum commaneret, ita edomuit prædicta volatilia et natilitia. . . . Se palpantes capere, contrectare et tenere permittunt . . . in gremio tuo ludendo reticent . . . ad mensam tuam si incola fueris veniunt . . . ad manus etiam blandientis, alis palpitantibus, confugiunt."—REGINALD DUNELMENSIS, *De Admirandis Cuthberti Virtutibus*, c. 27. Cf. RAINE'S *St Cuthbert;* Edinburgh, 1828, p. 22.

[3] "But fain Saint Hilda's nuns would learn,
If on a rock, by Lindisfarne,
Saint Cuthbert sits, and toils to frame
The seaborn beads that bear his name.

His tender charity towards the penitents who came to consult him.

The pious anchorite, however, in condemning himself to the trials of solitude, had no intention of withdrawing from the cares of fraternal charity. He continued to receive frequent visits, in the first place from his neighbours and brethren at Lindisfarne, and in addition from all who came to consult him upon the state of their souls, as well as to seek consolation from him in adversity. The number of these pilgrims of sorrow was countless. They came not only from the neighbouring shores, but from the most distant provinces. Throughout all England the rumour spread that on a desert rock of the Northumbrian coast there lived a solitary who was the friend of God, and skilled in the healing of human suffering. In this expectation no one was deceived; no man carried back from the sea-beaten island the same burden of suffering, temptation, or remorse which he had taken there. Cuthbert had consolation for all troubles, light for all the sorrowful mysteries of life, counsel for all its perils, a helping hand to all the hopeless, a heart open to all who suffered. He could draw from terrestrial anguish a proof of the joys of heaven, deduce the certainty of these joys from the terrible evanescence of both good and evil in this world, and light up again in sick souls the fire of charity —the only defence, he said, against those ambushes

> Such tales had Whitby's fishers told,
> And said they might his shape behold,
> And hear his anvil sound."
>
> SCOTT, *Marmion*, canto ii.

of the old enemy which always take our hearts captive when they are emptied of divine and brotherly love.[1]

His hospitality.

To make his solitude more accessible to these visitors, and above all to his brethren from Lindisfarne, he had built at some distance from the cave which was his dwelling-place, at a point where the boats could land their passengers, a kind of *parloir* and refectory for the use of his guests. There he himself met, conversed, and ate with them, especially when, as he has himself told, the monks came to celebrate with him such a great feast as Christmas. At such moments he went freely into all their conversations and discussions, interrupting himself from time to time to remind them of the necessity of watchfulness and prayer. The monks answered him, "Nothing is more true; but we have so many days of vigil, of fasts and prayers! Let us at least to-day rejoice in the Lord."[2] The venerable Bede, who has preserved to us the precious memory of this exchange of brotherly familiarity, has not dis-

[1] "Nec eos fefellit spes. Nullus ab eo sine gaudio consolationie abibat; nullum dolor animi quem illo attulerat redeuntem comitatus est. Noverat quippe mœstos pia exhortatione refovere: sciebat angustiatis gaudia vitæ cœlestis ad memoriam revocare . . . didicerat tentatis multifarias antiqui hostis pandere versutias, quibus facile carperetur animus, qui vel fraterno, vel divino amore nudatus exsisteret."—*Vita*, c. 22.

[2] "Quondam cum adhuc demorarer in mea insula solitarius. . . . Obseco, fratres, caute agamus et vigilanter. . . . Cumque post hoc aliquandiu epulis, exsultationi ac fabulis indulgeremus, rursus admonere cœpi ut solliciti exsisteremus in orationibus et vigiliis. . . . Et illi: Bene, inquiunt, et optime doces, sed tamen, quia abundant dies jejuniorum, orationis et vigiliarum, hodie gaudeamus in Domino . . . epulantibus nobis et diem lætum ducentibus."—*Vita*, c. 27.

dained to tell us also of the reproaches addressed by Cuthbert to his brothers for not eating a fat goose which he had hung on the partition-wall of his guests' refectory, in order that they might thoroughly fortify themselves before they embarked upon that stormy sea to return to their monastery.[1]

This tender charity and courteous activity were united in him to treasures of humility. He would not allow any one to suspect him of ranking the life of an anchorite above that of a member of a community. "It must not be supposed," he said, "because I prefer to live out of reach of every secular care, that my life is superior to that of others. The life of good cenobites, who obey their abbot in everything, and whose time is divided between prayer, work, and fasting, is much to be admired. I know many among them whose souls are more pure, and their graces more exalted than mine; especially, and in the first rank, my dear old Boswell, who received and trained me at Melrose in my youth."[2]

Thus passed, in that dear solitude, and among
676-684. these friendly surroundings, eight pleasant years, the sweetest of his life, and precisely those during which all Northumberland was convulsed by the

[1] "Pendebat autem auca in pariete. . . . Citissime mittite eam in caldaria: coquite et comedite, et sic in nomen Domini ascendite navem ac domum redite."—*Vita*, c. 36.

[2] "Jure est cœnobitarum vita miranda . . . quorum plurimos novi parvitatem meam longe et munditia mentis et culmine gratiæ prophetalis anteire. E quibus . . . Boisilus qui me quondam senex adolescentem nutriebat."—*Vita*, c. 22.

struggle between Wilfrid and the new king, Egfrid. All those important events, the expulsion of the great bishop from his see of York, his first appeal to Rome, his return with a verdict in his favour, his fruitless application to Egfrid, his imprisonment and exile, have left no trace upon the life which Cuthbert, tranquil and happy, lived on his island rock, until a day arrived when the reverberation of this blow struck him in his turn.

He is made Bishop of Lindisfarne.

This was the day upon which the king of the Northumbrians, accompanied by his principal nobles and almost all the community of Lindisfarne, landed upon the rock of Farne, to beg, kneeling and with tears,[1] that he would accept the episcopal dignity to which he had just been promoted in the synod of Twyford, presided over by the Archbishop Theodore. He yielded only after a long resistance, himself weeping when he did so. It was, however, permitted to him to delay his consecration for six months, till Easter, which left him still a winter to pass in his dear solitude, before he went to York, where he was consecrated by the primate, Theodore, assisted by six bishops. He would not, however, accept the diocese of Hexham, to which he had been first appointed, but persuaded his friend Eata, the Bishop and Abbot of Lindisfarne, to give up to him the monastic bishopric

26th Mar. 685.

[1] "Genuflectunt omnes, adjurant per Dominum, lacrymas fundunt, donec ipsum quoque lacrymis plenum dulcibus extrahunt latebris."—*Vita*, c. 24. Cf. *Hist. Eccl.*, iv. 28.

where he had already lived so long, and to occupy in his place the diocese created to vex Wilfrid in his own monastery. There is, however, no evidence that he was influenced in this change by any reluctance to become an accomplice, even indirectly, in the spoliation of which Wilfrid had been the victim.[1]

The diocese of Lindisfarne spread far to the west, much beyond Hexham. The Britons of Cumbria, who had come to be tributaries of the Northumbrian kings, were thus included in it. King Egfrid's deed of gift, in which he gives the district of Cartmell, *with all the Britons* who dwell in it, to Bishop Cuthbert, still exists.[2] The Roman city of Carlisle, transformed into an Anglo-Saxon fortress,

[1] See above, page 247. Let us repeat here that from the first deposition of Wilfrid in 678, his vast diocese, which comprehended all Northumberland, had been divided into two new dioceses, the boundaries of which seem to have been those of the two kingdoms of Deïra and Bernicia. The seat of the former remained at York, and that of the latter was established either at Hexham or Lindisfarne. The Abbot of Lindisfarne and of Melrose, Eata, was placed in the Bernician bishopric. In 681, Archbishop Theodore, always occupied with the thought of diminishing the size of dioceses, separated Hexham from Lindisfarne, and, leaving Eata in his monastic cathedral, nominated to Hexham Trumbert, who had just been deposed by the synod of 684 *pro culpa cujusdam inobedientiæ*. When he gave up Lindisfarne to his former prior, Cuthbert, and went to Hexham, he took up again the government of a church which he had already occupied for three years. There was also the monastic bishopric of Abercorn, quite in the north, the bishop of which, Trumwine, accompanied Egfrid when he went to Cuthbert to pray him to accept the episcopate. Eata died in 686, and was replaced by St John of Beverley.

[2] CAMDEN'S *Britannia*, iii. p. 131. Melrose was in the diocese of Lindisfarne; thus the population of Cuthbert's diocese was in a great part composed of vanquished races—Picts and Britons. This diocese was produced by the reaction of the foreign population whose lands had been absorbed in the kingdom of Bernicia.—VARIN, p. 33.

was also under his sway, with all the surrounding monasteries. It has been already told how the inhabitants were exhibiting to him the fine ruins, the walls and fountains of their city, at the moment when the mysterious intimation of Egfrid's downfall was given to him.[1] It was at Carlisle that he offered the first consolation to Queen Ermenburga, whom that calamity made a widow; and it was there also he returned to give to the queen the veil of the brides of Christ.

He remains a monk and missionary during his episcopate.

The episcopate of Cuthbert attaches itself to general history only by means of this dramatic episode of Carlisle, and by his connection with the enemy of Wilfrid, from this moment struck in her turn, and converted by adversity. But the history of his life receives an additional lustre from the virtues and good works which distinguished the brief course of this apostolical mission. His new dignity made no difference in his character, nor even in his mode of life. He retained his old habits as a cenobite, and even as a hermit. In the midst of his episcopal pomp he remained always the monk and missionary of old. His whole episcopate, indeed, seems to bear the character of a mission indefinitely prolonged. He went over his vast diocese, to administer confirmation to converts, traversing a crowd more attentive and respectful than ever, lavishing upon it all kinds of benefits, alms, clothing, sermons, miraculous cures—pene-

[1] See above p. 290.

trating as of old into hamlets and distant corners, climbing the hills and downs, sleeping under a tent, and sometimes indeed finding no other shelter than in the huts of branches brought from the nearest wood to the desert, in which he had made the torrent of his eloquence and charity to gush forth.[1]

Tenderness and compassion of his heart.

Here also we find illustrations, as at all previous periods of his life, of the most delightful feature of his good and holy soul. In the obscure missionary of Melrose, in the already celebrated prior of Lindisfarne, and still more, if that is possible, in the powerful and venerated bishop, the same heart, overflowing with tenderness and compassion, is always to be found. The supernatural power given to him to cure the most cruel diseases was wonderful. But in his frequent and friendly intercourse with the great Anglo-Saxon earls, the *ealdormen*, as well as with the mixed populations of Britons, Picts, Scots, and English, whom he gathered under his crosier, the principal feature in the numerous and detailed narratives which remain to us, and which gives to them a beauty as of youth, always attractive, is his intense and active sympathy for those human sorrows which in all ages are the

[1] "Implebat episcopi dignitatem, non tamen ut propositum monachi et anachoretæ virtutem desereret."—BOLLAND., p. 122. "Inter frequentiam turbarum monachicæ vitæ rigorem sollicitus observare . . . dum parochiam suam circumiens omnibus ruris casis et viculis monita salutis largiretur . . . devenit in montana et agresta loca, ubi multi erant de circumpositis villulus, quibus manus erat imponenda. . . . Tetenderunt ei tentoria, et cæsis de vicina silva ramusculis."—*Vita*, c. 26, 29, 32.

same, always so keen, and capable of so little consolation. The more familiar the details of these meetings between the heart of a saint and true priest and the simple and impetuous hearts of the first English Christians, the more attractive do they become; and we cannot resist the inclination of presenting to our readers some incidents which show at once the liveliness of domestic affections among those newly-baptised barbarians, and their filial and familiar confidence in their pastor. One of the ealdormen of King Egfrid arrived one day in breathless haste at Lindisfarne, overwhelmed with grief, his wife, a woman as pious and generous as himself, having been seized with a fit of violent madness. But he was ashamed to disclose the nature of the attack; it seemed to him a sort of chastisement from heaven, disgracing a creature hitherto so chaste and honoured: all that he said was that she was approaching death; and he begged that a priest might be given him to carry to her the viaticum, and that when she died he might be permitted to bury her in the holy isle. Cuthbert heard his story, and said to him with much emotion, "This is my business; no one but myself can go with you." As they rode on their way together, the husband wept, and Cuthbert, looking at him, and seeing the cheeks of the rough warrior wet with tears, divined the whole; and during all the rest of the journey consoled and encouraged him, explaining to him that madness was not a punishment of crime,

The mad countess.

but a trial which God inflicted sometimes upon the innocent. "Besides," he added, "when we arrive we shall find her cured; she will come to meet us, and will help me to dismount from my horse, taking, according to her custom, the reins in her hand." And so the event proved; for, says the historian, the demon did not dare to await the coming of the Holy Ghost, of which the man of God was full. The noble lady, delivered from her bondage, rose as if from a profound sleep, and stood on the threshold to greet the holy friend of the house, seizing the reins of his horse, and joyfully announcing her sudden cure.[1]

On another occasion, a certain Count Heunna, from whom he sought hospitality during one of his pastoral journeys, received him on his knees, thanking him for his visit, but at the same time telling that his wife was at the point of death, and he himself in despair. "However," said the count, "I firmly believe that were you to give her your blessing, she would be restored to health, or at least delivered by a speedy death from her long and cruel

[1] "Erat præfectus Egfridi regis Hildmer nomine . . . a B. Cuthberto specialiter dilectus, et . . . crebro ab eo visitatus. Cujus uxor . . . membra in diversa raptando, non minimum cunctis incutebat horrorem. . . . Adscendit vir equum et concitus venit. . . . Erubescebat eam confiteri insanam quam vir Domini sobriam semper videre consueverat . . . olim tam pudicam et castam. . . . Hoc est meum ministerium: non alium sed ipse tecum pergere debes. Cumque agerent iter, videns socium suum flentem . . . profluentibus in maxillas lacrymis . . . consolari eum mitissimis verbis cœpit. . . . Ipsa mihi occurrens in acceptione habenarum istius equi quas nunc teneo . . . ministrabit nobis."—*Vita*, c. 15. "Viro Dei gratulabunda occurrens, jumentum quo sedebat per frenum tenuit."—BOLLAND., p. 120.

sufferings." The saint immediately sent one of his priests, without entering into the sick-room himself, to sprinkle her with water which he had blessed. The patient was at once relieved; and herself came to act as cupbearer to the prelate, offering him, in name of all her family, that cup of wine which, under the name of the *loving cup*, has continued since the time of the Anglo-Saxons to form a part of all solemn public banquets.[1]

The mother consoled.

A contagious disease at another time broke out in one part of his diocese, to which Cuthbert immediately betook himself. After having visited and consoled all the remaining inhabitants of one village, he turned to the priest who accompanied him, and asked, "Is there still any one sick in this poor place whom I can bless before I depart?" "Then," says the priest, who has preserved this story to us, "I showed him in the distance a poor woman bathed in tears, one of whose sons was already dead, and who held the other in her arms, just about to render his last breath. The bishop rushed to her, and taking the dying child from its mother's arms, kissed it first, then blessed it, and restored it to the mother, saying to her, as the Son of God said to the widow of Nain, 'Woman, weep not; have no more fear or sorrow; your son is saved,

[1] "Pervenit ad comitis vicum. Ille . . . rem ut erat miserabilis et lacrymabilis omni familiæ, hoc est, uxoris velut hurticæ, vitam desperabilem episcopo revelavit. . . . Jam surgens, sicut socrus Petri, sanata ministravit eis. Illa enim primum totius episcopo *poculum lætitiæ* dedit, qui sibi exspiranti calicem mortis auferebat."—BOLLAND., p. 122.

and no more victims to this pestilence shall perish here.'"[1]

His relations with women;

No saint of his time or country had more frequent or affectionate intercourse than Cuthbert with the nuns, whose numbers and influence were daily increasing among the Anglo-Saxons, and especially in Northumberland. The greater part of them lived together in the great monasteries, such as Whitby and Coldingham; but some, especially those who were widows or of advanced age, lived in their own houses or with their relatives. Such was a woman devoted to the service of God, who had watched over Cuthbert's childhood (for he seems to have been early left an orphan) while he kept his sheep on the hills near Melrose, from the eighth year of his age until his entrance into the convent at the age of fifteen. He was tenderly grateful to her for her maternal care, and, when he became a missionary, took advantage of every occasion furnished to him by his apostolic journeys to visit her whom he called his mother, in the village where she lived. On one occasion, when he was with her, a fire broke out in the village, and the flames, increased by a violent wind, threatened all the neighbouring roofs. "Fear nothing, dear

With his foster-mother;

[1] "Presbyter Tidi . . . in quodam vico qui dicitur Medelpong. . . . Conversus ad me mitissime dixit: Est-ne aliquis in villa hac adhuc pestilentia languens? . . . Ego jam ostendens signavi ei mulierem . . . quæ lacrymis faciem rigantibus præteritam ac præsentem testabatur ærumnam. . . . O mulier, noli flere . . . ne metuas, nec mœsta sis."—Bolland., p. 124. *Vita*, c. 33.

mother," the young missionary said to her; "this fire will do you no harm;" and he began to pray. Suddenly the wind changed; the village was saved, and with it the thatched roof which sheltered the old age of her who had protected his infancy.[1]

From the cottage of his foster-mother he went to the palaces of queens. The noble Queen of Northumberland, Etheldreda, the saint and virgin, *regia virgo*, says the historian, before she left her throne and conjugal life to bury herself in the cloister, loved to surround herself with the religious of both sexes most renowned for their piety, and to converse familiarly with them for the good of her soul. She often called the young prior of Lindisfarne to her as well as Wilfrid, her guide and spiritual master, and this is the only occasion on which a meeting between these two contemporaries, so venerable yet so different, can be supposed to have taken place. The holy queen had a great friendship for Cuthbert. She overwhelmed him and his monastery with gifts from her own possessions, and wishing, besides, to offer him a personal token of her close affection, she embroidered for him, with her own hands (for she embroidered beautifully), a stole and maniple covered with gold and precious stones. She chose

With Queen Etheldreda;

[1] "A quadam muliere, nomine Kenspid, adhuc vivens, sanctimonialis vidua. . . . Namque eam matrem appellavit, sæpe visitans eam. . . . Ventus abripiebat ignitos fœnei tecti fasciculos. . . . Præfata Dei famula concita accurrit. . . . Non timeas, inquit, mater; animi æquior esto: non enim tibi tuisve hæc quamlibet ferox flamma nocebit."—BOLLAND., p. 120. *Vita*, c. 14.

to give him such a present that he might wear this memorial of her only in the presence of God whom they both served, and accordingly would be obliged to keep her always in mind at the holy sacrifice.[1]

With the great abbesses;

Cuthbert was on still more intimate terms with the holy princesses, who, placed at the head of great communities of nuns, and sometimes even of monks, exercised so powerful an influence upon the Anglo-Saxon race, and particularly on Northumbria. While he was still at Melrose the increasing fame of his sanctity and eloquence brought him often into the presence of the sister of King Oswy, who then reigned over the two Northumbrian kingdoms. This princess, Ebba,[2] was abbess of the double monastery of Coldingham, of which mention has already been made, the farthest north of all the religious establishments of Northumbria, and that in which Queen Etheldreda sought refuge first after leaving her husband. Cuthbert was the guest for

Ebba of Coldingham;

[1] "Regia virgo . . . sanctæ religionis ministros in fœdus amicitiæ viros ac mulieres sibi admittebat, quorum consilio atque consortio in omnem sanctimoniam provehi . . . arbitrabatur . . . præsertim . . . in familiaritatem colligendam fore ex cœtu monastico asserebat, inter quos . . . vitæ sanctitatis decore insignitum Cuthbertum . . . in gratiam ac dilectionem exhibuit. . . . Opus eximium et præclarum . . . ex auro et lapidibus pretiosis, propriis ut fertur manibus docta auri texturæ ingenio . . . ob internæ dilectionis intuitum . . . festinavit. . . . Juste enim virgo virginem et dilecta dilectum tali decebat oppugnari obsequio. . . . Unde solum in conspectu regis Domini assistens uteretur."—Thomas Eliensis, *Vita S. Etheldr.*, c. 9. This writer of the twelfth century affirms that the stole and maniple embroidered by Etheldreda for Cuthbert were venerated till his time at the Cathedral of Durham.

[2] "Sanctimonialis femina et mater ancillarum Christi nomine Ebba, regens monasterium . . . religione pariter ac nobilitate cunctis honorabilis."—*Vita*, c. 10.

several days of the royal abbess; but he did not intermit on this account his pious exercises, nor, above all, his austerities and long prayers by night on the sea-shore. During the day he preached to Ebba's two communities, edifying them by the wonderful harmony between his life and his doctrine.[1] Perhaps he was not himself equally edified by all he saw, if we give faith to the assertions of later historians, who trace back to that visit the severe regulations attributed to him in respect to the intercourse of monks with women of whatsoever condition.[2]

[1] "Nec negare potuit quod ab eo charitas ex ancillæ Dei corde poposcit. . . . Dies aliquot ibi permanens, viam justitiæ quam predicabatur, omnibus actu pariter ac sermone pandebat."—*Vita*, c. 10.

[2] No trace of this prohibition is to be found in Bede, or in the narrative of the monk of Lindisfarne. But an obstinate tradition, repeated by all more recent writers, declares that Cuthbert forbade the entrance of women into the church of the monastery at Lindisfarne. When his body was transferred, along with the episcopal see, at an after period to Durham, the same prohibition was maintained there. No woman could enter the great cathedral of that city. The history of this celebrated church is full of anecdotes relative to the attempts made by ladies of high rank to evade this humiliation. As time went on the severity relaxed, and there is still shown in the cathedral a line in blue marble which no woman could cross, but which permitted them at least to enter the nave, and see from a distance the choir and shrine of the saint. One of his historians adds: "Non tamen sexum illum detestando persequitur, sed occasionis delinquendi materiam amputando elidere conatur."—Reginaldus Dunelmensis, *De Admirandis B. Cuthberti Vertutibus*, p. 151. The Irish version of his Life gives two reasons for this prohibition—the first, that the daughter of the Pictish king, "in domo patris adulterata a quovis juvene," had represented the young hermit as being the father of her child; and afterwards, that, when he was a bishop, and during a pontifical procession, he saw himself followed by a woman of dazzling beauty, who attracted the eyes and troubled the minds of all present. "Vidit plerosque hominium cachinno resultando ridere. . . . Circumspiciens videt quandam sub specie mulieris, et crine, et facie, cum nitente vestium varietate, miro modo fulgentem. Omnem humanum effigiem

With Elfleda of Whitby.

But the authority of this tradition, weakened as it is by the total silence of Cuthbert's biographers, is contradicted by his example. To the end of his life he maintained a very intimate and constant friendship with another abbess of the blood-royal of Northumbria, Elfleda, niece of St Oswald and of King Oswy, who, though still quite young,[1] exercised an influence much greater than that of Ebba upon the men and the events of her time. It has been seen[2] that, out of consideration for her, the holy anchorite left his islet of Farne to hold a conference with her in another island nearer to Whitby, in respect to the anxieties by which she was assailed on account of her brother, King Egfrid. Cuthbert was heartily attached to all the royal family of Northumbria, the Bernician dynasty, which had been restored in his childhood under the great and saintly Oswald. He had a special devotion for that martyred king, whose head was represented on his seal. Oswald's niece, the Abbess Elfleda, before she became the generous and powerful protectress of Wilfrid, was thus the friend and client of St Cuthbert, linking together

sui pulchritudine præcedebat. . . . Quicumque illius vultus inspexerant præ nimiæ cupidinis lascivia pene seipsos excesserant." It was a devilish apparition, which he put to flight by sprinkling it with holy water. From that time until the twelfth century women were forbidden to be interred in churches dedicated to him, *Libellus de Ortu*, c. 29. One of these churches gave its name to the town and county of Kirkcudbright (Cuthbrichtiskhirche), REGINALDUS, c. 84.

[1] She was born in 654, and was not thirty when Cuthbert met her in Coquet Isle. See the genealogical table A in Appendix.

[2] Page 299.

these two illustrious personages as the holy Queen Etheldreda had done. She had the liveliest affection for the Prior of Lindisfarne, and at the same time an absolute confidence in his sanctity. When she was assailed by an alarming illness, which fell into paralysis, and found no remedy from physicians, she cried, "Ah, had I but something which belonged to my dear Cuthbert, I am sure I should be cured." A short time after her friend sent her a linen girdle, which she hastened to put on, and in three days she was healed.[1]

Shortly before his death, and during his last pastoral visitation, Cuthbert went to see Elfleda in the neighbourhood of the great Monastery of Whitby, to consecrate a church which she had built there, and to converse with her for the last time. They dined together, and during the meal, seeing his knife drop from his trembling hand in the abstraction of supernatural thoughts, she had a last opportunity of admiring his prophetic intuition, and his constant care for the salvation of souls. The fatigue of the holy bishop, who said, laughingly, "I cannot eat all day long; you must give me a little rest" —the eagerness and pious curiosity of the young abbess, anxious to know and do everything, who rushes up breathless during the ceremony of the dedication to ask from the bishop a *memento* for

[1] "Sanctimonialis virgo et regalis. . . . Multo virum Dei semper excolebat amore. . . . Cum nil curationis adhibere medici. . . . Utinam haberem aliquid de rebus Cuthberti mei! Scio certe et credo et confido in Domino quia cito sanarer."—BOLLAND., 121. *Vita*, c. 23.

a monk whose death she had just heard of—all those details form a picture complete in its simplicity, upon which the charmed mind can repose amid the savage habits and wild vicissitudes of the struggle, then more violent than ever, between the Northumbrians and Picts, the Saxons and the Celts.[1]

His last visit to the Abbess Verca.

But the last of all his visits was for another abbess, less illustrious and powerful than the two princesses of the blood, but also of high birth, and not less dear to his heart, if we may judge by the mark of affection which he gave her on his death-bed. This was Verca, abbess of one of that long line of monasteries which traced the shores of the Northern Sea, seated on the high promontories, or at the mouths of the Northumbrian rivers. Her convent was on the mouth of the Tyne, the river which divided the two Northumbrian kingdoms, Deïra and Bernicia, and to it the body of the holy King Oswin had been carried after his murder.[2] She gave Cuthbert a magnificent reception; but

[1] "Fidelissima abbatissa Elfleda de sancto episcopo aliud scientiæ spiritualis miraculum mihi revelavit. . . . Cum in parochia quæ dicitur Osingadum, simul in convivio sederent . . . præscius vicini sui obitus . . . rogatus a nobilissima et sanctissima virgine . . . venit ad possessionem monasterii ipsius, quatenus ibidem et ipsam videre atque alloqui, et ecclesiam dedicare deberet. . . . Manus ejus tremefacta, cultellus quem tenebat decidit in mensam. Jocose respondit: Num tota die manducare valebam? jam aliquando quiescere debui. Hæc audiens illa confestim misit ad majus suum monasterium. . . . Illa statim ad episcopum cucurrit . . . anhelans in basilicam pervenit."—Monach. Lindisf., ap. Bolland., 123. Bede, *Vita*, c. 34.

[2] See above, p. 46.

the bishop was ill, and after the mid-day meal which was usual in all the Benedictine monasteries, he became thirsty. Wine and beer were offered to him, yet he would take nothing but water; but this water, after it had touched his lips, seemed to the monks of Tynemouth, who drank the remainder, the best wine they had ever tasted. Cuthbert, who retained nothing of the robust health of his youth, already suffered from the first attacks of the disease which carried him off. His pious friend was no doubt struck by his feebleness, for she offered him, as the last pledge of spiritual union, a piece of very fine linen to be his shroud.[1]

Two short years of the episcopate had sufficed to

[1] "A religiosa et ad sæculum quoque nobilissima famula Christi Verca abbatissa magnifice susceptus, postquam de meridiana quiete surrexerunt. . . . Confitebantur alterutrum quod videretur sibi nunquam melius vinum bibisse, sicut unus ex ipsis postea in nostro monasterio . . . sua mihi relatione testatus est."—BEDE, *Vita*, c. 35. I do not know why the Bollandists, Mabillon, and M. Varin, agree in placing the monastery of Verca, not at Tynemouth on the Northumbrian Tyne, which flows past Hexham and Newcastle, on the road from Whitby to Lindisfarne, but at Tyninghame, a little monastery founded by St Baldred († 606), also on the seaside like Tynemouth, but more to the north, at the mouth of the Scotch Tyne, which traverses Lothian and flows through Haddington. The remains of this very ancient monastery are still to be seen in the Earl of Haddington's park. This district had been restored to the Pictish dominion after the defeat of Egfrid and the flight of the Bishop of Abercorn, with all the communities of the country. The last historian of our saint, Mgr. Eyre, having more complete information, and writing on the spot, proves that it was Tynemouth, where there were two monasteries, one of monks on the north, the other of nuns on the south of the stream. Mr Joseph Robertson is of the same opinion; he attributes the error of Mabillon to the inexact information given him by a priest of the Scottish college at Paris, who, though a learned man, had the mania, so common among the Scotch, of claiming for his country both places and personages belonging to Ireland and England.

He returns to his rock to die. Jan. 687.

consume his strength. After celebrating the feast of Christmas in 686 with the monks of Lindisfarne, the presentiment of approaching death determined him to abdicate, and to return to his isle of Farne, there to prepare for the last struggle. Here he lived but two months in the dear and pleasant solitude which was his supreme joy, tempering its sweetness by redoubled austerities. When his monks came to visit him in his isle, which storms often made inaccessible for weeks together, they found him thin, tremulous, and almost exhausted. One of them, who has given us a narrative of the end of his life, revived him a little by giving him warm wine to drink, then seating himself by the side of the worn-out bishop upon his bed of stone to sustain him, received from his beloved lips the last confidences and last exhortations of the venerated master. The visits of his monks were very sweet to him, and he lavished upon them to the last moment proofs of his paternal tenderness, and of his minute care for their spiritual and temporal wellbeing. His last illness was long and painful. He fixed beforehand the place of his burial, near the oratory which he had hollowed in the rock, and at the foot of a cross which he had himself planted. "I would fain repose," said he, "in this spot, where I have fought my little battle for the Lord, where I desire to finish my course, and from whence I hope that my merciful Judge will call me to the crown of righteousness. You

will bury me, wrapped in the linen which I have kept for my shroud, out of love for the Abbess Verca, the friend of God, who gave it to me."[1] The abbess's shroud.

He ended his holy life preaching peace, humility, and the love of that unity which he thought he had succeeded in establishing in the great Anglo-Celtic sanctuary, the new abbot of which, Herefrid, begged of him a last message as a legacy to his community. "Be unanimous in your counsels," the dying bishop said to him, in his faint voice; "live in good accord with the other servants of Christ; despise none of the faithful who ask your hospitality; treat them with friendly familiarity, not esteeming yourself better than others who have the same faith and often the same life. But have no communion with those who withdraw from the unity of Catholic peace, either by the illegal celebration of Easter or by practical illdoing. Remember always, if you must make a choice, that I infinitely prefer that you should leave this place, carry- His last exhortation.

[1] "Ad dilectum eremiticæ conversationis agonem quantocius remeare curavit, quatenus indita sibi sollicitudinis mundanæ spineta liberior priscæ compunctionis flamma consumeret. . . . Qui cum duo menses in magna repetitæ suæ quietis exsultatione transigeret, multo consuetæ districtionis rigore corpus mentemque constringeret. . . . Vinum calefaciens attuli . . . videbam namque in facie ejus quia multum inedia simul et languore erat defessus. Completa curatione resedit quietus in stratu: resedi et ego juxta eum. . . . Hic ubi quantulumcumque pro Domino certamen certavi . . . unde ad coronam justitiæ sublevandam me a pio judice spero. . . . Nolui quidem ea vivens indui, sed pro amore dilectæ Deo feminæ, quæ hanc mihi misit, Vercæ abbatissæ, ad obvolvendum corpus meum reservare curavi."—*Vita*, c. 36, 37. This shroud, recognisable by its extreme fineness, was found when his tomb was opened in 1104, according to Reginald, *De Admirandus*, &c., c. 41.

ing my bones with you, rather than that you should remain here bent under the yoke of wicked heresy. Learn and observe with diligence the Catholic decrees of the fathers, and also the rules of monastic life which God has deigned to give you by my hands. I know that many have despised me in my life, but after my death you will see that my doctrine has not been despicable." These energetic words, and the allusion to his predecessor Colman, who had left Lindisfarne, carrying with him the bones of the holy Bishop Aidan, rather than submit to ritualistic unity with Rome, shows that this unity had in the Celt Cuthbert a champion less impetuous and less rash than Wilfrid, but not less resolute and devoted.[1]

His death. 20th Mar. 687.

This effort was the last. He lost the power of speech, received the last sacraments in silence, and died, raising his eyes and arms to heaven, at the hour when it was usual to sing matins, in the night of the 20th March 687. One of his attendants immediately mounted to the summit of the rock, where the lighthouse is now placed, and gave to the monks of Lindisfarne, by waving a lighted

[1] "Pondus ægritudinis facilitatem loquendi minoraverat. Verum me diligentius inquirente, quem hereditarium sermonem, quod ultimum vale fratribus relinqueret, cœpit disserere pauca sed fortia. . . . Multo plus diligo ut eruentes de tumulo tollentesque vobiscum ossa mea recedatis ab his locis, et ubicumque Deus providerit incolæ maneatis, quam ut ulla ratione consentientes iniquitati schismaticorum jugo colla subdatis. . . . Scio enim quia etsi quibusdam contemptibilis vixi, post meum tamen obitum, qualis fuerim, quam mea doctrina non sit contemnenda videbitis."—*Vita*, c. 39.

torch, the signal agreed upon to announce the death of the greatest saint who has given glory to that famous isle. He was but fifty, and had worn the monastic habit for thirty-five years.

His most intimate friend dies on the same day and at the same hour.

Among many friends, he had one who was at once his oldest and most beloved—a priest called Herbert, who lived as an anchorite in an island of Lake Derwentwater, one of those fine lakes which make the district of Cumberland and Westmorland the most picturesque part of England. Every year Herbert came from his peaceful lake to visit his friend in the other island, beaten and undermined continually by the great waves of the Northern Sea; and upon that wild rock, to the accompaniment of winds and waves, they passed several days together in a tender solitude and intimacy, talking of the life to come. When Cuthbert, then a bishop, came for the last time to Carlisle, to give the veil to Queen Ermenburga, Herbert seized the opportunity, and hastened to refresh himself at that fountain of eternal benefits which flowed for him from the holy and tender heart of his friend. "My brother," the bishop said to him, "you must ask me now all that you want to know, for we shall never meet again in this world." At these words Herbert fell at his feet in tears. "I conjure you," he cried, "do not leave me on this earth behind you; remember my faithful friendship, and pray God that, after having served Him together in this world, we may pass into His glory together."

Cuthbert threw himself on his knees at his friend's side, and after praying for some minutes, said to him, "Rise, my brother, and weep no more; God has granted to us that which we have both asked from Him." And in fact, though they never saw each other again here below, they died on the same day and at the same hour, the one in his isle bathed by the peaceable waters of a solitary lake, the other upon his granite rock fringed by the foam of the ocean; and their souls, says Bede, reunited by that blessed death, were carried together by the angels into the eternal kingdom.[1] This coincidence deeply touched the Christians of Northumbria, and was long engraven in their memory. Seven centuries later, in 1374, the Bishop of Carlisle appointed that a mass should be said, on the anniversary of the two saints, in the island where the Cumbrian anchorite died, and granted an indulgence of forty days to all who crossed the water to pray there in honour of the two friends.[2]

In all the histories of the saints, where shall we

[1] "In insula stagni illius pergrandis . . . jamdudum Cuthberchto spiritualis amicitiæ fœdere copulatus. . . . Dum sese alterutrum cœlestis sapientiæ poculis debriarent. . . . Memento, frater Hereberte, ut modo quidquid habes me interroges. . . . Obsecro per Dominum ne me deseras, sed tui memor sis fidissimi sodalis. . . . Unius ejusdemque momento temporis egredientes e corpore spiritus eorum, mox beata invicem visione conjuncti sunt, atque angelico ministerio pariter ad regnum translati cœleste."—*Vita*, c. 28.

[2] EYRE, p. 59. English readers will thank us for reminding them of the beautiful lines dedicated to our two saints by Wordsworth, a poet whose style of expression does not always equal the nobility and purity

find a more complete contrast than that between Wilfrid and Cuthbert, though they were contemporaries, and devoted, from the bottom of their hearts, to the same cause? The life of Cuthbert, much shorter and less afflicted than that of Wilfrid, affords rest to the observer in the midst of the disturbances of a conflict to which, at the same time, he was not a stranger; but his part seems always to have been that of mediator and consoler. He liked better to persuade and to heal than to fight and vanquish. Beside Wilfrid, who is the saint of active life, of polemics, of publicity, of the struggle with kings, princes, and prelates, Cuthbert appears to us as the saint of nature, of a life retired and

Contrast between Cuthbert and Wilfrid.

of his inspiration, but who deserves to be better known than he is in France :—

"If thou, in the dear love of some one friend,
Hast been so happy that thou know'st what thoughts
Will sometimes, in the happiness of love,
Make the heart sink, then wilt thou reverence
This quiet spot; and, stranger, not unmoved,
Wilt thou behold this shapeless heap of stones—
The desolate ruins of St Herbert's cell.
Here stood his threshold; here was spread the roof
That sheltered him, a self-secluded man,
After long exercises in social care
And offices humane, intent to adore
The Deity with undistracted mind,
And meditate on everlasting things
In utter solitude. But he had left
A fellow-labourer, whom the good man loved
As his own soul; and when, with eye upraised
To heaven, he knelt before the crucifix,
While o'er the lake the cataract of Lodore
Pealed to his orisons, and when he paced
Along the beach of this small isle, and thought
Of his companion, he would pray that both,
Now that their earthly duties were fulfilled,
Might die in the same moment. Nor in vain
So prayed he, as our chronicles report.
Though here the hermit numbered his last day,
Far from St Cuthbert, his beloved friend,
These holy men both died in the same hour."

humble, of popular preaching, of solitude, and of prayer.

Notwithstanding this, the popularity of Cuthbert was immense, infinitely more general and more lasting than that of Wilfrid, or indeed of any other saint of his country and century. The Northumbrians listened with delight to the story of the pontiff who lived their own rustic and seafaring life, a shepherd and a sailor by turns—who understood and had shared their occupations, their feelings, their necessities—who had taught them goodness by practising it himself, and truth by serving it without remission, but with a boundless charity.

While these recollections were engraved in the faithful memory of the labouring classes, kings, lords, and prelates rivalled each other in demonstrations of respect and munificence to his relics and his spiritual posterity. All these different but equally persevering kinds of admiration produced an incredible amount of offerings, and especially gifts of land, made in his honour to the churches of Lindisfarne and Durham, in which successively he found a tomb. The words of Scripture were never more completely verified—"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

Posthumous glory of St Cuthbert.

It would require a volume to tell the history of the worship of St Cuthbert and his relics, a history which, during many centuries, is mixed up with

the history of the north of England, and sometimes takes the leading place in it.[1] The history of the various journeys made by the monks of Lindisfarne, in the ninth and tenth centuries, to take back from the Danes the corpse of their beloved saint, along with the skull of the martyr-king Oswald, would make of itself an *Odyssey* full of varied and curious episodes. This treasure at last found an asylum upon a steep platform formed like a horseshoe, covered with wood, and surrounded on three sides by a rapid river, where was built, in 995, a chapel which took the name of Durham, and to which was afterwards transferred the episcopal and abbatial see. From this moment the name and memory of Cuthbert hovered over the magnificent Cathedral of Durham, one of the most beautiful in the world. This magnificent building, with its three storeys of arched windows, its two towers, its five naves and two transepts, forms, with the ancient castle of the bishop, built by William the Conqueror, a monument at once of religion and art as admirable as it is little known. It can be compared only to Pisa, to Toledo, to Nuremberg, or Marienburg. It has

Translation to Durham.

[1] This volume actually exists; it has been compiled with great care and elegance by Mgr. Eyre, Catholic priest of Newcastle, under the title of *History of St Cuthbert, with an Account of the Wanderings with his Body during* 124 *years, of the State of his Body until* 1542, *and of the various Monuments erected to his Memory* (London, 1862); and has very serviceable maps and plans. It contains the later history of Lindisfarne and of the Cathedral of Durham. Amongst other curious details we are told that a statue of the holy bishop, erected four centuries after his death, bore this inscription: "Sanctus Cuthbertus monachus, episcopus Lindisfarnensis, nunc patronus ecclesiæ ac libertatis Dunelmensis."

even a great advantage over all these celebrated places, in the beauty of the landscape which encloses it. It is the sole existing example of a splendid cathedral situated in the midst of an old wood, and on the height of a rock, the abrupt descent of which is bathed by a narrow and rapid river.[1]

The extreme veneration with which the Saxon people surrounded the relics of St Cuthbert made this church the best endowed in England. The humble anchorite, who had lived on his rock by the modest produce of his manual labour alone, thus created the richest benefice, after Toledo, in Christendom.

Cuthbert had vainly asked his monks to bury him upon his rock of Farne, in order to spare them the trouble caused by the criminals who would come to take refuge at his tomb.[2] The

[1] I may draw attention to the view from the corner of Framwellgate Bridge as one of the most picturesque and curious in Europe. The visitor must follow the shady avenue of oaks and beeches which skirts the left side of the horseshoe formed by the Wear opposite to that on which the cathedral stands. Those who know the little town of Semur in Auxois, with its castle and church built on a peninsula surrounded by the Armançon, may, by trebling the proportions of the landscape and its monuments, form an idea of the situation of Durham. Those who have visited Toledo, and recollect how the Tagus hollows out a bed for itself between two rocks and winds about the plateau on which is built the ancient capital of Spain, can still better imagine the site of Durham ; but at Toledo the metropolitan church, buried among houses, does not equal the effect of the English cathedral ; it lacks also the fine trees which surround the sanctuary of St Cuthbert with so beautiful a girdle.

[2] " Vobis commodius esse arbitror ut hic requiescam propter incursionem profugorum vel noxiorum quos non libet : qui cum ad corpus meum forte confugerint, qui (qualiscumque sum) fama tamen exivit de me quia

monks of Lindisfarne exposed themselves willingly to these importunate visitors, rather than deprive their church of what was to be its most precious treasure. After his translation to Durham, universal consent conferred in an ever increasing degree upon the sanctuary where his relics reposed a universally respected right of asylum. The ring of sculptured bronze attached to the door of the cathedral, which any pursued criminal or persecuted innocent had but to grasp in order to have part in the inviolability of the sanctuary, is still shown. The few who ventured to disregard this inviolability incurred celestial punishment, which increased the fame of the sanctuary. But the good saint did not wait until they had sought the shelter of his tomb to extend the hand of tutelary protection over the unhappy and the oppressed. The records of his church are rich in narratives of his miraculous interposition in behalf of the unfortunate victims of feudal tyranny, or of the too often arbitrary and pitiless justice of the middle ages.[1] The poor who invoked him saw the

famulus Christi sum : necesse habetis sæpius pro talibus apud potentis sæculi intercedere idque ideo de præsentia corporis mei inultum tolerare laborem."—BEDE, *Vita*, c. 37.

[1] See the curious anecdotes of the twelfth century, related by the monk Reginald in his *Libellus de Admirandis Beati Cuthberti Virtutibus quæ novellis patratæ sunt temporibus*, which was written after the year 1172, at the request of the holy abbot Ælred of Rievaulx, and published for the first time by the Surtees Society in 1835. This collection is one of the most curious memorials of the religious and social condition of England in the twelfth century. Among a crowd of legends more or less fabulous, it contains many details equally original and authentic of the man-

saint penetrate into the hideous dungeons where they were buried alive. At his voice their chains fell off, their instruments of torture were broken, and, like the angel who delivered St Peter, Cuthbert led them to a safe place through the midst of sleeping jailers and closed doors.

He becomes the patron saint of Northumbria against internal oppression and foreign invasion.

But in this posthumous history of the holy abbot of Lindisfarne nothing is more singular or more touching than to see a man so humble, so modest, and so pacific, transformed into the patron saint, historical, warlike, and political, of all Northumbria, and that for six centuries at least after his death. It became a matter of pride to Northumbrian patriotism to sustain and demonstrate that Cuthbert was the most powerful intercessor produced by the Anglo-Saxon race, and that neither the glorious Queen Etheldreda nor the holy King St Edmond, martyred by the Danes, nor St Thomas of Canterbury himself, were so much listened to by God.[1] The principal Anglo-Saxon kings emulated each other in seeking his protection. The great King Alfred, when hidden in the marsh of Glastonbury, at the most critical moment of his struggle with the Danes, saw St Cuthbert in a vision, who encouraged him, and promised him victory and the

ners and institutions of the time. Side by side with great examples of sanctity and of habitual study of the Holy Scriptures, we find, both in lay and in religious life, scandals and excesses of tyranny which nothing could now make supportable in Western Europe, and which could only be reproduced under the dominion of the Czars.

[1] "Gloriosæ reginæ Etheldrithæ . . . tribus præcipuis Anglorum sanctis."—REGINALD, c. 19, 115.

deliverance of his country. Canute, the great king of the Danes, when he became master of England, went barefooted to the tomb of Cuthbert, to pray there for the protection of the saint most venerated by the people he had just subdued. William the Conqueror himself, when he hastened to Durham to avenge the death of those Normans whom the inhabitants, intrenched in their sacred peninsula, had repulsed and slain, experienced a sort of supernatural impression before the tomb of the Anglo-Saxon saint, and respected the immunities on which the vassals of the bishopric plumed themselves in honour of their patron.[1]

In fact, the Norman Conquest did not in any way diminish the popularity of Cuthbert; Normans and Saxons were rivals for his protection. It is on record that an Anglo-Norman knight of the eleventh century returned from a pilgrimage to Rome, carrying the whole way, upon his bosom, a great piece of antique marble intended to decorate the altar of the holy bishop.[2]

Under the Anglo-Saxon monarchy Durham thus inherited at once all the veneration which attached to Lindisfarne, the cradle of faith and of the national Church in Northumbria—and to the personal memory of St Cuthbert. Under the feudal royalty of the Plantagenets, the bishops who took special honour to themselves as his successors, suc-

[1] Simeon Dunelmensis, c. 44.
[2] Reginald, c. 74.

ceeded in some degree in identifying themselves and their domains with him. Devotion to St Cuthbert became so respected and so officially efficacious, that all that was given to them and all they acquired was legally invested with what was called, in the middle ages, *freedom*—that is to say, exemption from all taxes and all jurisdiction except that of the possessor. All the vast bishopric was considered the patrimony of St Cuthbert, and bore his name. By reason of this privilege the bishops of Durham acquired by degrees all the attributes of royalty. They had a chancery, an admiralty, an exchequer, civil and criminal judges, the right of coining money, and in addition the defence and suzerainty of the English frontier against the Scotch.[1] It was in consequence of having wasted the lands of St Cuthbert that King David of Scotland drew upon himself the terrible defeat known as the Battle of the Standard;[2] and it was upon a fief of the saint's patrimony, though enclosed by the diocese of York, that this decisive victory of the Anglo-Norman barons was gained.[3]

Two centuries after that great day, Normans and Saxons, finally melted down into one nation, marched to battle against the Scots under the *vexillum Sancti Cuthberti*, which was no other than the corporal used by the prior of Lindisfarne

[1] CAMDEN'S *Britannia*, Gough's ed., vol. iii. p. 109.

[2] See above, p. 360.

[3] RICARD. HAGULSTAD., p. 82, 88, 93, Surtees edition.

to cover the chalice at mass, and which his pious admirers had taken the fancy of placing on the point of a lance, and carrying in place of a banner.[1] Edward III. was in France, where he had just won the battle of Crecy, and was besieging Calais. King David II. of Scotland, son of the illustrious Robert Bruce, had taken advantage of his absence to make a new invasion of Northumberland. He came as far as the walls of Durham at the head of thirty thousand Scots, whose devastations recalled only too distinctly those of their ancestors the Picts. The Queen of England, the generous Philippa of Hainault, led in her own person, to meet the enemy, an army inferior in number, but inspired by the idea of punishing the sacrilegious cruelty of the invaders. The Scots had not even respected the possessions and vassals of the abbey, which was still called the patrimony of St Cuthbert. At the moment when the fight was about to begin, the prior of the monastery planted the standard of the

Battle of Neville's Cross. 17th Oct. 1346.

[1] REGINALD, *De Virtutibus*, c. 39. See also BOLLAND., p. 127, for another curious instance of the protection given by St Cuthbert against the Scotch in 1297, from whence Camden derived his saying—"Anglorum reges et proceres credidisse S. Cuthbertum contra Scottos tutelarum divum fuisse." Walter Scott, always so skilful in invoking the poetical and religious traditions of the Scottish Marches, has not passed over this one:—

> "Who may his miracles declare?
> Even Scotland's dauntless king, and heir, . . .
> Before his standard fled.
> 'Twas he, to vindicate his reign,
> Edged Alfred's falchion on the Dane,
> And turned the Conqueror back again,
> When with his Norman bowyer band
> He came to waste Northumberland."
>
> —*Marmion*, canto ii. 15.

saint upon a height near the field of battle, around which all the monks assembled in prayer. Victory pronounced itself for the English : their formidable archers, drawn specially from among the vassals of St Cuthbert, made short work with the Scottish men-at-arms. The Scottish army was annihilated, and King David wounded and made prisoner along with his archbishop and the flower of his nobility. The next morning the victors, led by the chiefs of the two great chivalric houses of Norman Northumberland, the Nevilles and Percies, carried back to the monastic cathedral, along with the banners taken from the Scots, the precious relic they had borrowed. It reappeared in many battles, always assuring victory to the English, up to the reign of Henry VIII. The last time that this holy banner appeared on a field of battle was again in the hands of the Nevilles and Percies, in the glorious but ill-fated insurrection of the Northumbrians against the atrocious tyranny of Henry VIII. in 1536.[1] This insurrection, known under the name of the *Pilgrimage of Grace*, in favour of the religion which the saints of Lindisfarne had brought into Northumbria, and which the miserable husband of Anne Boleyn wished to destroy, ended only

[1] RAINE'S *Priory of Hexham*, Appendix, p. 136, notes 141, 150. The instruction of Henry VIII. to the Duke of Norfolk, as to the punishment of rebels, may be read p. 151. They direct that *a good number* of the inhabitants of every city, village, and hamlet shall be hanged and quartered, and, above all, as many priests and canons as possible are without ceremony *to be tyed uppe*. It reads like the instructions of the Committee of Public Safety to the Terrorist generals in La Vendée.

in the massacre of the rural population, and in the judicial murder of the principal nobles and priests of the country—among others, of the last successor of St Wilfrid at Durham. Under the reign of this *Defender of the Faith* the standard of St Cuthbert had the same fate as his body, which up to that time had remained uncorrupted. These holy remains, along with the bones of the venerable Bede, were torn from the shrine in which they had been venerated by so many grateful generations; and the noble banner was also torn from the sanctuary and thrown into the fire by the wife of an apostate priest.[1]

[1] The shocking details of this profanation, with an extremely curious description of the ancient usages of the great Cathedral of Durham before the Reformation, are to be found in a rare volume, entitled *The Ancient Rites and Monuments of the Monastical and Cathedral Church of Durham.* By J. D. (Davies), of Kidevelly; London, 1672, in 8vo.

James Raine, an Anglican writer whose erudition is clouded by his bigoted prejudices against the religion and the times which he has studied, affirms that at the opening of the tomb of St Cuthbert in 1827 his body was discovered, together with his garments, comb, and other objects represented in the illustrations of a work entitled *St Cuthbert, with an Account of the state in which his Remains were found upon the opening of his Tomb in Durham Cathedral in the year* 1827. By James Raine, rector of Meldon; Durham, 1828, in 8vo. The authenticity of this discovery is denied by Mgr. Eyre, according to whom the body of the saint is deposited in a hiding-place, the secret of which is known only to three English Benedictines!

The British Museum now contains the most ancient monument consecrated to the honour of the great Northumbrian saint—the Gospel called St Cuthbert's. This celebrated MS. was the gift of Sir Robert Cotton, 1631. It was written between 700 and 720 by two bishops of Lindisfarne, Eadfreth and Ethelwold, and illuminated by the latter. The monk Betfreth enriched it with gilding and precious stones. It has a Northumbrian glossary of the end of the ninth century, interlined by a priest, Aldred—"bonæ mulieris filius eximius." The whole four, according to a final note, "Deo et Cuthberto construxerunt vel ornaverunt." It is a most curious

Popularity of St Cuthbert on sea as on land.

Less dazzling and less universal, but not less lasting, was the popularity of the holy Bishop of Lindisfarne with the seafaring population of the Northumbrian shores. This is apparent through all the different narratives which remain to us concerning the worship of which he was the object during so many centuries, and which throw a precious light upon the ideas, manners, and belief of the ancient English people. But let us state, in the first place, that all the monks of that district were, like Cuthbert, bold and unwearied sailors. There are no more interesting recollections of their life than those which show them to us in constant conflict with the element on which England has established her dominion. In that point, as in all else, the monks show themselves in history the pioneers of the Anglo-Saxon race. It is pleasant to see them sounding a prelude, as it were, by their courage and address, to the exploits of the most maritime nation in the world.

Sailor monks.

"Rule, Britannia! Britannia, rule the waves!"

The narratives of the seventh century are full of the cruel tempests which reigned upon the east coast of England, still one of the shores most abounding in shipwrecks.[1] But no danger stopped

monument of Irish art. According to Sir Frederick Madden, it bears all the marks of this special and extremely elegant art. It is discussed at length in an essay by Dr Reeve, entitled *On Early Irish Calligraphy*, 1860, in 4to.

[1] "En tellus nivibus, nebulis cœlum horrescit, aer flatibus adversis

the sons of those bold sailors who owed the conquest of Great Britain to their experience of the sea. The Anglo-Saxon monks, under the frock and scapular, wore hearts which did not yield either in vigour or activity to any of their ancestors or countrymen. They coasted continually between the different monasteries and their dependencies, which extended along that coast bristling with rocks and reefs. Sometimes the furious waves drove them out to sea, out of sight of land, sometimes held them shut up in some desert isle or solitary bay for whole days and weeks. Then, as soon as the wind fell, they put out again to encounter new dangers in their miserable barks, rocked on the crest of the waves like sea-gulls. They were compared to sea-birds by those who from the shore saw them struggling against the storm ; and it was under this aspect that they appeared for the first time to Cuthbert, when in his youth, before he became a monk, he witnessed, in the midst of a mocking and hostile crowd, the fruitless efforts of the monks of Tynemouth to effect a landing, against wind and tide, with the wood for build-

Cuthbert, when a child, sees them like sea-birds on the waves.

furit, fluctibus æquor . . . manente triduo tempestate prævalida. . . . Exorta subito tempestas fera, omnem eis naviganda facultatem abstulit . . . septem dies fervente unda conclusi, tristes in insula resederunt . . . quinque diebus obstitit tempestas ne redire possemus."—*Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 11, 36, 37. "Ecce subito, positis in medio maris . . . tanta ingruit tempestatis hiems ut neque velo neque remigio quicquam proficere valeremus. . . . Cumque diu cum vento pelagoque frustra certantes tandem post terga respiceremus . . . invenimus nos undique versum par tempestate præclusos."—BEDE, *Hist. Eccles.*, v. i.

ing, which they were carrying to their monastery in five little boats.[1] The prayer of Cuthbert saved them, and brought them happily into port, where their brethren awaited them, all kneeling in a mass upon a point of rock which projected into the raging waves, to implore from heaven the safety of their companions.

When Cuthbert himself became a monk, his duties as missionary and prior, and afterward his prolonged sojourn upon the isle of Farne, familiarised him with all the dangers and habits of that seafaring existence which was so closely associated with monastic life. This recollection, joined to the popular glory of his name, gave him the place of patron saint to the poor seamen condemned to gain their bread by braving daily that stormy sea. Late in the twelfth century it was still told among them how, in the midst of the hurricane, the sailors in extremity saw the holy Bishop of Lindisfarne appear in the midst of them, with his mitre on his head and his crosier in his hand, which he used sometimes as a helm, sometimes as an oar, sometimes as a grappling-iron, to save them from shipwreck, and bring them to a place of safety : no one dared to ask him his name, for all recognised, by the sheen of his beautiful and gentle counte-

His appearance to lost sailors.

[1] "Quod videntes e monasterio fratres, emissis in fluvium naviculis, eos qui in ratibus laborabant adjuvare nitebantur. . . . Sed vi fluminis et violentia ventorum superati, nequaquam valebunt. . . . Collecti in proximo obice flectebant genua . . . adeo ut quasi quinque aves parvulæ, quinque rates undis insidentes apparuerent."—*Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 3.

nance, the tender-hearted pontiff whom they had all been taught to venerate from their infancy as the protector of the country and of the coast.[1] It occurred to no one in those days to doubt the reality of such an apparition. For all the nations of Christendom at this period there was nothing more natural than the supernatural. It was only a more frequent and more direct intervention of the omnipotence of God, which appalled them or consoled them, but did not surprise.

In this dangerous archipelago, and on the precipitous island where Cuthbert had his favourite dwelling and where he died, he had more than one successor ambitious of following his holy footsteps in the same spot where he had best known and served his God. The first of these was a monk of Ripon called Ethelwold, who, more effectually moved by the example of Cuthbert than by the lessons of Wilfrid, lived for twelve years in the cell of his holy predecessor, the opening of which he attempted to close against the wind and rain by clay, hay, and finally by a hide, that he might not be troubled in his contemplations.[2] But when the

The hermit Ethelwold prays for the shipwrecked. 687–695.

[1] "Cuthbertus, quasi in specie corporali, omnibus visibilis et palpabilis apparuit, et in prora navis, gubernatoris de more, resedit. . . . Baculo pastorali de modo gubernaculi, pontem sævientem secando dividebat." —Reginaldus, *De Virtutibus S. Cuthberti*, c. 23.

[2] "Sumto fœno, vel argilla, vel quicquid hujusmodi materiæ reperisset, stipaverat rimulas, ne quotidianis imbrium sive ventorum injuriis ab orandi retardaretur instantia. . . . Pelliculam vituli in angulo, quod et ipse et prædecessor Cuthbertus sæpius orans stare vel genuflectere solebat, clavis affixam violentiis procellarum opposuit."—*Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 46.

moaning of the wind and the waves, which broke against the basaltic precipices of his isle, warned him of coming calamity, he issued from his shelter to hasten to the aid of the shipwrecked; and the sailors, driven in the midst of storm, saw him kneeling on the summit of his rock with his hands raised to heaven imploring from God the salvation of his brethren.[1]

The Anglo-Saxon anchorite thus set up before God and man, on his unknown isle, and in the depths of an unknown age, a touching and glorious symbol of the everlasting part played by his fellow-monks, always ready to lavish upon Christians treasures of intercession, and to encounter public plagues and perils, as well as those temptations and tempests of the soul of which the waves in fury are but an imperfect image.

Grace Darling, the Christian heroine of the same archipelago in the nineteenth century.

It is pleasant to connect with this old saint of the past a Christian heroine of our own days, the young and touching figure of Grace Darling, who came from the very isle of Cuthbert and Ethelwold to expose her life on behalf of the shipwrecked—as if that wild and threatening coast had been predestined by God up to our own time to be at once the locality and the witness of the noblest deeds of charity. Grace was the daughter of the

[1] "Ubi longius visum levavimus, vidimus in ipsa insula Farne, egressum de latibulis suis amatissimum Deo patrem iter nostrum inspicere. Audito fragore procellarum ac ferventis Oceani, exierat videre quid nobis accideret, cumque nos in labore ac desperatione positos cerneret, flectebat genua."—BEDE, *Hist. Eccles.*, v. 1.

keeper of one of those lighthouses which modern science has raised upon the group of isles between Lindisfarne and Bamborough. One night, in the midst of a terrible storm, she was awoke by the cries of the crew of a great ship which had gone ashore on a neighbouring reef. She awoke her father, and alone with him, oar in hand, in a frail boat, she rushed to the help of the perishing. The sea had never been more furious, nor the difficulty and danger of managing a boat greater. After desperate efforts, she at last reached the rock to which clung the last survivors of the crew. They were but nine in number, all of whom she took into her boat. The rage of the waves and violence of the wind were such that it took almost an entire day to row them back to the lighthouse, where she harboured and cared for them for three days and nights. All England burst into a unanimous transport of enthusiasm on learning this heroic act; and from the royal palace to the smallest village all echoed her praise. She was only twenty, and was no doubt already attacked by the pulmonary disease of which she died four years afterwards. She died without any desire to leave her father and her island, leaving only a name, worthy of eternal recollection, worthy to be inscribed among the heroes and saints. In Anglo-Saxon times she would have been canonised by the popular voice, as were all the saints whose history we record; and her place would have been fixed between

5th Sept. 1838.

1842.

Hilda and Ebba, the two great abbesses of her race and country, whose profaned altars and forgotten fame still hallow in the north and south the historic region which Grace Darling has lighted up with a modern and touching glory.[1]

[1] The ship wrecked upon the reefs of Longstone Island was a steamboat called the Forfarshire. Grace Darling's lighthouse is situated upon the isle called Longstone or Outer Farne. See the fine notice of this incident given by M. Alphonse Esquiros in one of his excellent articles upon England and English life (*Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1864), and for the localities Cruchley's excellent *Reduced Ordnance Map*, No. 62. Grace Darling's father died in May 1865. He is buried beside his daughter, who rests in the cemetery at Bamborough, upon the site of the ancient capital of those Northumbrian kings of whom we have spoken so much. The monument raised by a national subscription to this young heroine of Christian charity is visible at sea a great distance off.

CHAPTER II.

ST BENEDICT BISCOP, AND THE MONASTERIES OF WEARMOUTH AND YARROW.

Benedict Biscop represents science and art, as Wilfrid represents public, and Cuthbert spiritual, life.—His birth and conversion.—His four first expeditions to Rome.—He gains the heart of King Egfrid.—Foundation of Wearmouth.—He brings masons and glassmakers from France.—His fifth and sixth visits to Rome, from which he brings back many relics, books, and pictures.—Important works of painting in the new monasteries.—A Roman abbot teaches liturgical music to all the Northumbrian monasteries, and assures himself of the orthodoxy of the English clergy in respect to the heresy of the Monothelites.—Foundation of Yarrow.—Fraternal union of the two monasteries in imitation of their patrons Saints Peter and Paul.—Benedict takes his nephew Easterwine as his coadjutor.—The occupations of a Saxon noble transformed into a monk.—Death of Easterwine.—Severe illness of Benedict.—His last injunctions.—His touching death by the side of his dying coadjutor.—After him Ceolfrid, the son of an ealdorman, disciple of Wilfrid and Botulph, governs the two monasteries.—History of Botulph, the founder of Boston and apostle of the Benedictine order.—Ceolfrid, as abbot, takes great pains to increase the libraries.—He makes an exchange of a book for an estate with the King of Northumbria.—His desire to die at Rome.—Grief of the six hundred monks who accompanied him to the spot where he embarked.—Their letter to the Pope.—He is able to go only as far as Langres, where he dies.—How Christianity taught the barbarous Saxons to love each other.

A THIRD saint, whose name has been already mentioned in this record, comes in between Wilfrid and Cuthbert, Benedict Biscop, the companion of Wil-

Benedict Biscop, the representative of art and science

as Wilfrid was of public, and Cuthbert of spiritual, life.

frid in his first journey to Rome, and during the last half of his life the neighbour of Cuthbert, whom he followed closely to the tomb. In the retirement of the cloister, and, so to speak, in private life, Benedict held the position which Wilfrid held in public life, as the champion of Roman unity and propagation of the Benedictine rule. He represents, besides, in the monastic constellation of the seventh century, intelligence, art, and science, as Cuthbert represents the gift of preaching and ascetic life. His fame was less than that of Wilfrid, and, with still greater reason, less than that of Cuthbert; but he has, notwithstanding, won a noble place in the annals of the Anglo-Saxon Church. We find various features in his life which do honour to his soul, and which are not without interest in the history of human intelligence.

Birth and conversion of Benedict Biscop. 628.

Benedict was born, like Wilfrid, but several years before him, of the highest Anglo-Saxon nobility.[1] While he was still very young, he held an office in the household of King Oswy, who, according to the customs of the new-born feudalism, invested him with a fief taken from the national property, and proportioned to the importance of his office.[2] At twenty-five he gave up secular life, mar-

653.

[1] Wilfrid's historian informs us that his true name was Baduging: we have no information why he took the name of Benedict, under which he is generally known, nor whence came his surname of Biscop, since he was never a bishop.

[2] "Nobili stirpe gentis Anglorum progenitus . . . cum esset minister Oswii regis, et possessionem terræ suo gradui competentem, illo donante, perciperet."—BEDE, *Vitæ Abbatum in Wiramutha et Girvum*, c. 1.

riage, and his family, restored his lands to the king, and dedicated himself to the service of God. Before he settled in any community he went to Rome, where he had been long attracted by that desire of paying his vows at the tombs of the apostles which became so general among the Anglo-Saxons. It has been seen, in the history of Wilfrid,[1] how, after beginning their journey together, the two young Northumbrian nobles separated at Lyons, and how Benedict, after his first visit to Rome, returned there a second and third time, having in the mean time assumed the monastic habit in the island of Lerins, a monastery which had just entered into the family of St Benedict. It may also be remembered that Pope Vitalinus, struck with the piety and knowledge of so constant and zealous a pilgrim, assigned him as guide and interpreter to the Greek Theodore, who undertook, at the age of sixty-seven, to take the place of St Augustine, and who retained his Anglo-Saxon guide with him for two years, transforming him from a monk of Lerins into the abbot of the principal monastery in Canterbury.[2]

His journeys to Rome.

669.

After thus spending two years with the new archbishop, the Abbot Benedict, instead of revisiting his native district, went for the fourth time to Rome. He was then in the prime of life; but when it is considered what were the difficulties and dangers of such a journey at such a time—when we remember that a journey from London to Rome

671.

[1] See above, p. 139.

[2] St Peter's, since called St Augustin's.

was then twice as long as and a hundred times more dangerous than a journey from London to Australia is now — we are amazed at the resolution and energy which then, as ever since, has induced so many Christians, and especially so many Anglo-Saxon monks, not once only, but many times in their life, to cross the sea and the Alps on their way to Rome. His fourth expedition was undertaken in the interests of literature. He brought back from it a rich cargo of books, partly sold, partly given to him; and in passing by Vienna, the ancient capital of the Gauls, on his return, he brought with him many more, which he had deposited there in the charge of his friends.[1] When he returned at length to his native Northumbria he sought King Egfrid, the son of his former master, then the reigning monarch, and told him all he had done during the twenty years which had passed since he left his country and the royal service. Then, endeavouring to communicate to him the religious ardour with which his own heart was filled, he explained to the king all he had learned, at Rome and elsewhere, of ecclesiastical and monastic discipline, showing him the books and relics which he had brought back. Egfrid, who had not yet begun his unfortunate struggle with Wilfrid, allowed himself to be won by the stories of the pilgrim, for

He gains the heart of King Egfrid.

[1] "Libros omnis divinæ eruditionis non paucos, vel placito pretio emptos, vel amicorum dono largitos retulit. . . . Emptitios ibi quos apud amicos commendaverat, recepit."—*Vitæ Abbat.*, c. 4.

whom he conceived a great affection ; and in order that he might apply his experience to the government of a new community, he detached from his own possessions, and presented to Benedict, an estate large enough to feed seventy families, and give occupation to seventy ploughs, according to the mode of calculating the value of land among the Anglo-Saxons.[1]

Foundation of Wearmouth. 673–675.

The estate was situated at the mouth of the Wear, a little stream which flows through Durham, and throws itself into the Northern Sea a little south of the Tyne. This gave the name of Wearmouth to the new monastery, which was consecrated to St Peter, the prince of the apostles, according to the express wish of Egfrid, in agreement with that of Benedict as an evidence of his leanings towards Rome.[2]

[1] "Confestim ei terram LXX. familiarum de suo largitus."—*Ibid.* Commentators suppose that Bede intended to indicate under the word *familia* the space of ground otherwise called a *hidé* or *carrucata*—that is to say, the portion of land which could be cultivated by one plough in the space of a year.

[2] There are two distinct ecclesiastical sites at the mouth of the Wear —on the north, Monk-Wearmouth, where Benedict Biscop's monastery was situated ; and Bishop-Wearmouth, on the south, which owes its origin to the bishops of Durham. Both are swallowed up in the town of Sunderland, situated on the east of Bishop-Wearmouth, on the sea, which is now one of the principal seaports in England.

Wearmouth has become at the present time one of the chief centres of the collieries, and also of those hideous evils which lately excited, thanks to the zeal of Lord Shaftesbury, the consternation and horror of England. See the Parliamentary discussions of 1842. There are no more *lazy monks* to feed the poor population ; but there existed up to 1842 a crowd of women and girls, almost naked, who worked among the men, for fourteen hours successively, sixteen hundred feet below the surface of the earth, and at a temperature of about ninety degrees.—*Report from the Select*

He brings masons and glass-makers from France.

This foundation was no sooner assured than the unwearied Benedict took ship again, to seek in France *cæmentarii*, like those whom Wilfrid brought about the same time from Canterbury. As soon as they arrived he set them to work in building a stone church, in the Roman style, for everything that came from Rome was dear to him. It was in honour of St Peter that he undertook this work, and it was carried on with so much energy that, a year after the first stone was laid, the church was roofed in and mass celebrated under one of those stone arches which excited the surprise and admiration of the English of the seventh century. He brought glassmakers also from France, for there were none in England ; and these foreign workmen, after having put glass into the windows of the church and new monastery, taught their art to the Anglo-Saxons.[1] Animated by a zeal which nothing could discourage, and inspired by intelligent patriotism, and a sort of passion for beauty in art, which shrank neither from fatigue nor care,[2] he sent to

Renewed expeditions to Rome. 678.

Committee, 1841, p. 4. Let us add with pleasure, that a humane legislation has since then applied remedies to the revolting abuses thus brought to a salutary publicity.

[1] "Cæmentarios qui lapideam sibi ecclesiam juxta Romanorum quem semper amabat morem facerent, postulavit, accepit, attulit. . . . Misit legatarios Galliam, qui vitri factores, artifices videlicet Britanniis eatenus ignotos, ad cancellandas ecclesiæ, porticuumque et cænaculorum ejus fenestras adducerent. . . . Anglorum ex eo gentem hujusmodi artificium nosse ac discere fecerunt."—*Vitæ Abbat.*, c. 5. I believe that this, and the instance before quoted of Wilfrid, are the first known examples of the use of glass windows. There is, however, no evidence that these windows were coloured.

[2] "Quippe studio advehendi cognatis aliquod insolitum amor patriæ, et

seek beyond the seas all that he could not find in England—all that seemed necessary to him for the ornamentation of his church; and not finding even in France all he wanted, he went for the fifth time to Rome. Even this was not his last visit, for some years later he made a sixth pligrim- 685.
age.[1] On both occasions he brought treasures back with him, chiefly books in countless quantities and of every kind. He was a passionate collector, as has been seen, from his youth. He desired each of his monasteries to possess a great library, which he considered indispensable to the instruction, discipline, and good organisation of the community; and reckoned upon the books as the best means of retaining his monks in their cloisters; for much as

voluptas elegantiæ asperos fallebat labores."—WILL. MALMESB., *De Gest. Reg.*, i. 54.

[1] In speaking of these two last journeys, Bede says *quarta* and *quinta vice*, because he counts only the departures from England—"*De Britannia* ad Romam accurrens." But he himself explains that during the second absence of Benedict Biscop, from 665 to 667, he made two pilgrimages to Rome—the one before, the other after his visit to Lerins. We add a chronological summary of the life of Benedict Biscop :—

628. Birth.
653. He gives up secular life, and goes to Rome for the first time.
665. His second journey to Rome: he becomes a monk at Lerins.
667. Third journey to Rome.
669. He returns with the Archbishop Theodore, and becomes Abbot of St Peter's, at Canterbury.
671. Fourth journey to Rome.
672. Return by Vienna, where he recovers his books.
674. Foundation of Wearmouth.
676. Journey to France in search of artists.
678. Fifth journey to Rome.
682. Foundation of Yarrow. He takes Easterwine as his coadjutor.
684. Sixth journey to Rome.
686. Death of Easterwine. Return of Benedict.
690. His death.

he loved travelling himself, he did not approve of other monks passing their time on the highways and byways, even under pretext of pilgrimages.[1]

Important paintings in his new monasteries.

Along with the books he brought relics, not alone for his own community, but for other churches in England, and a great number of pictures and coloured images. By introducing these images from Rome into Northumberland, Benedict Biscop has written one of the most curious, and, at the same time, forgotten pages in the history of art. It is apparent that Rome was then the grand reservoir not only of tradition, but also of graphic or symbolic representations for the instruction and edification of the faithful, the first outlines of which, traced in the Catacombs by the tombs of the martyrs, began to reappear in the great mosaics which still decorate the apses of the primitive churches in Rome. The Venerable Bede, who speaks with enthusiasm of the expeditions of his master and friend, leads us to suppose that these were portable pictures, which could only have been painted on wood; but it may be supposed that the Abbot of Wearmouth brought back with him both painters and mosaic-workers, to work on the spot at the decoration of his churches. How can it be otherwise explained how pictures on wood, brought even by

[1] "Innumerabilem librorum omnis generis copiam. . . . Bibliothecam quam de Roma nobilissimam et copiosissimam advexerat ad instructionem ecclesiæ necessariam. . . . Bibliothecam utriusque monasterii quam magna instantia cepit."—*Vitæ*, c. 6, 9, 14. Cf. *Homil. in Natale Benedicti Abbatis*, t. vii. col. 465, and LINGARD, *Antiquities*, t. ii. p. 129.

water from Rome to England, should have been large enough to cover the walls and arches of the two or three churches of which Bede speaks ?

However this may be, the result was that the most ignorant of the Christians of Northumbria found, on entering these new monastic churches, under a material form, the attractive image of the instructions which the monastic missionaries lavished on them. Learned and unlearned could contemplate and study with delight, here the sweet and attractive figure of the new-born Saviour, there the twelve apostles surrounding the Blessed Virgin; upon the northern wall all the parables of the Gospels, upon the southern the visions of the Apocalypse ; elsewhere a series of pictures which marked the harmony between the Old and New Testaments ; Isaac carrying the wood for his sacrifice opposite to Jesus bearing His cross; the brazen serpent opposite Jesus crucified, and so on.[1] When we discover

[1] This passage, so important for decorative art, is as follows : "Picturas imaginum sanctarum quas ad ornandam ecclesiam quam construxerat, detulit ; magnam videlicet B. M. V., etc., . . . quibus medium ejusdem ecclesiæ testudinem, ducto a pariete ad parietem tabulato præcingeret ; imagines evangelicæ historiæ quibus australem ecclesiæ parietem decoraret ; imagines . . . quibus septentrionalem æque parietem ornaret, quatenus intrantes ecclesiam omnes etiam literarum ignari, quaqua versum intenderent, vel semper amabilem Christi sanctorumque ejus . . . contemplarentur aspectum."—C. 6. Further on, when speaking of the fruits of his sixth and last journey to Rome : "Nam et tunc (attulit) domínicæ historiæ picturas quibus totam B. Dei Genitricis, quam in monasterio majore fecerat, ecclesiam in gyro coronaret : imagines quoque ad ornandum monasterium ecclesiamque B. Pauli Apostoli de concordia Veteris et Novi Testamenti summa ratione compositas exhibuit, etc." These last words apply to the second monastery founded at Yarrow, of which we have yet to speak. Thus it is apparent that the abbot

these details in the decoration of the Northumbrian monasteries twelve hundred years ago, we cannot but bethink ourselves that our own century, in two memorable instances, has reproduced this sublime thought: at Spires, in the vast cathedral which the munificence of the King of Bavaria has raised out of its ruins; and at Paris in the venerable Basilica of St Germain des Prés, where our attention was attracted for the last time by the pencil of Flandrin, and from which a last lustre has been thrown upon talent so pure, so elevated, so serene, so naturally devoted to the service of the eternal truth. His name, though modern, like that of Ozanam, does not seem displaced amid the recollections of the saints and monuments of Christian antiquity!

He brings with him a Roman abbot, who teaches liturgical music to all the Northumbrian monasteries.

After Latin and Greek books, after what was then called literature and philosophy, after architecture and art, it was the turn of music—of the art which above all others is liturgic and monastic. On his return from his fifth voyage, Benedict brought back with him from Rome an eminent monk called John, precentor of St Peter's, and abbot of St Martin's at Rome, to establish at Wearmouth the music and Roman ceremonies with entire exactitude, and according to the practice of the Basilica of St Peter at Rome. As soon as he had arrived at Wearmouth, this learned abbot set out in writing the order of

Benedict Biscop had undertaken to decorate these churches—that of St Peter at Wearmouth, St Paul at Yarrow, and a third dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, *in majore monasterio*, which may have been only the choir or apsis of the first.

the celebration of feasts for all the year, of which he soon circulated numerous copies. Then he opened classes, at which he taught, *viva voce*, the liturgy and ecclesiastical chants. The best singers of the Northumbrian monasteries came to listen to him, and invited him to visit their communities.[1]

It was thus that Benedict Biscop drew from Rome, and spread throughout the soil of his country, by many different channels, the instructions and traditions of art consecrated by religion. History, it seems to us, offers few pages better adapted to refresh and console the soul than that on which the mother and sovereign Church is thus seen to open her protecting bosom to nations scarcely yet issued from the night of paganism, and to reveal to them, by the hands of her monastic ministers and missionaries, not only the mysteries of faith and the laws of morality, but also the pleasures of the mind and the beauties of art.

The passionate zeal of our abbot for the building and decoration of his monastic houses did not make him forget the more essential interests of his foundations. Before leaving Rome, he took care to constitute his community upon the immovable basis of the rule of St Benedict.[1] He obtained from Pope Agathon a charter which guaranteed the

[1] "Ritum canendi ac legendi viva voce præfati monasterii cantores edocendo. . . . De omnibus pene ejusdem provinciæ monasteriis ad audiendum eum, qui cantandi erant periti, confluebant."—*Hist. Eccles.*, iv. 18.

[2] "Post compositum juxta regulam monasterium, profectione completa."—C. 6.

liberty and security of the new Monastery of Wearmouth, as Wilfrid did for his favourite Abbey of Hexham, and perhaps at an even earlier date. But far from requiring this guarantee against the King of Northumbria, as his old friend did, Bede takes care to prove that the pontifical grant was asked and obtained with the consent, and even at the desire, of Egfrid, and was confirmed in a public assembly by the king and bishops.[1] From the time of their first separation at Lyons, Benedict seems always to have kept at a distance from Wilfrid, and no appearance of sympathy for the trials of the great persecuted bishop appears in him. Notwithstanding, they served the same cause, and inspired the Pope at least with equal confidence. Agathon gave a wonderful mark of this confidence to Benedict Biscop, by making his monastery the centre of the mission with which he had charged the precentor of St Peter's, the object of which was to establish the orthodoxy of the English bishops and clergy in respect to the heresy of the Monothelites.[2]

[1] "Non vile munus attulit . . . epistolam privilegii . . . cum licentia, consensu, desiderio et hortatu Egfridi regis . . . qua monasterium ab omni prorsus extrinseca irruptione tutum perpetuo redderetur ac liberum . . . quod Britannias perlatum et coram synodo patefactum."—*Vitæ Abbat.*, c. 6, 12, and *Hist. Eccles.*, iv. 18.

[2] This mission seems to indicate on the part of the Pontiff a certain distrust of Theodore. As has been already seen, Pope Vitalianus, in conferring on him the dignity of Metropolitan of England, joined to him the Abbot Adrian and Benedict Biscop himself, lest his nationality as a Greek might make him accessible to the errors of the Monothelites who then desolated the Church. At a later period, Agathon charged Abbot John, precentor of St Peter's, to examine exactly into the faith of the Church of England, and to make his report at Rome. The pontifical

King Egfrid, who was then at the height of his struggle with Wilfrid, seems to have been anxious to make up, to his own conscience and that of his Catholic people, for his violence towards the Bishop of York, by the intimacy of his relations with the two other great monks of his kingdom, the anchorite Cuthbert and the abbot Benedict. In order to give the latter a new mark of sympathy and protection, he assigned to him another estate, not so great as that of Wearmouth, for it could support only forty families, but so near to the first that it seemed possible to unite the two gifts, and make of them one vast patrimony. This was the cradle of the Monastery of Yarrow, the name of which is inseparably linked with that of the venerable Bede. Yarrow was situated a little to the north of the Monastery of Wearmouth, in a similar position, at the mouth of a river, the Tyne, which there falls into the Northern Sea, after following a course parallel to that of the Wear, and was dedicated to the Apostle St Paul, as Wearmouth was to the Apostle St Peter. The thought which inspired Biscop of establishing the

Foundation of Yarrow. 682.

envoy was present at the Council of Heathfield, called by the Archbishop Theodore (17th September 680), where the Church of England made her confession of orthodox faith, and declared her acceptance of the five general councils, and that of St Martin. Abbot John carried with him a copy of the acts of this council, to submit it to the Pope, and on the other hand gave the acts of the council of the Pope St Martin to St Benedict Biscop's monastery to be copied. He died before he could return to Rome, and his body was carried to St-Martin-de-Tours, which he had visited on his way to England, on account of his great devotion to that saint, of whom his monastery in Rome bore the name.

spirit and image of Rome upon this Northumbrian shore, already sweet with the perfume of monastic flowers, is everywhere apparent.[1] He wanted a reproduction of St Paul's outside the Walls, at a certain distance from his Saxon copy of St Peter of the Vatican. Although he had appointed one of his most intimate friends and fellow-pilgrims, Ceolfrid, abbot of the new foundation, Benedict's intention was to make only one community of the two houses, in sign of the fraternal union which he longed to see reigning among them, and which should be suggested to them by the example of the two glorious apostles whom he had given to them as patrons.

Fraternal union of the two houses after the example of their patrons St Peter and St Paul.

In order to be more at liberty to devote his time to travel, as well as to be more at the disposal of the king, who continually sought his presence and counsels,[2] Benedict took a coadjutor in the government of his first Monastery of Wearmouth. This new abbot was his nephew, and, like Ceolfrid, one of his most devoted companions.[3] His name was Easterwine. He was younger than Benedict by twenty-two years, and, like him,

He takes his nephew, Easterwine, for his coadjutor. 682-686.

[1] "Plaga olim et suave halantibus monasteriorum floribus dulcis, et urbium a Romanis ædificatarum frequentia renidens."—GUILL. MALMESB., *De Gest. Reg.*, i. 9, 54.

[2] I borrow this detail from another Life of Benedict and Ceolfrid, which, if not written by Bede, has evidently furnished him with information, which he has repeated literally; it is to be found in the *Opera Minora*, and has been reprinted by Dr Giles in the Appendix of his excellent edition of Bede, vol. vi. p. 416-42.

[3] "Ut quem solus non poterat laborem, socia dilectissimi commilitonis virtute levius ferret."—*Vitæ Abbat.*, c. 6.

of high birth; for it was the descendants of the noblest races of Northumbria who filled the monasteries, giving themselves up to occupations the most unlike those of their ancestors—to manual or literary work, to prayer and penitence. He had been, like Benedict, a soldier in the warlike household of King Egfrid. At twenty-one he had given up everything, to enter into the community formed by his uncle at Wearmouth; nor did the one dream of asking, nor the other of offering, any exemption from the charges and observances of religious life, on account of relationship or nobility. The noble youth took pride only in following minutely the rule and occupations of the house, like any other monk. Thanks to his illustrious biographer, we know what the occupations of a Saxon thane turned monk were in the seventh century. His duties were — to thrash and winnow the corn, to milk the goats and cows, to take his turn in the kitchen, the bakehouse, and the garden, always humble and joyous in his obedience. When he became coadjutor, and was invested, in Benedict's absence, with all his authority, the young abbot continued the course of communal life; and when his duties as superior led him out of doors to where the monks laboured in the fields, he set to work along with them, taking the plough or the fan in his own hands, or forging iron upon the anvil. He was robust as well as young and handsome; but his look was infinitely gentle, and his

conversation full of amiability.[1] When he was compelled to reprove a fault, it was done with such tender sadness that the culprit felt himself incapable of any new offence which should bring a cloud over the benign brightness of that beloved face. His table was served with the same provisions as that of the monks; and he slept in the general dormitory, which he left only five days before his death, being then hopelessly ill, to prepare himself, in a more solitary place, for the last struggle. When he felt his end approaching, he had still strength enough left to go down to the garden, and, seating himself there, called to him all his brethren, who wept the anticipated loss of such a father. Then, with the tenderness which was natural to him, he gave to each of them a last kiss.[2] The following night he died, aged thirty-six, while the monks were singing matins. Such happy deaths, which are common in the history of the time, seem to have been at once the privilege and the seal of all those generous vocations which filled the numerous monasteries of converted England.

Death of Easterwine. 7th March 686.

[1] "Vir nobilis, sed insigne nobilitatis non ad jactantiæ materiem, ut quidam, despectumque aliorum, sed ad majorem, ut Dei servum decet, animi nobilitatem convertens. . . . Minister Egfridi regis . . . depositis armis . . . tantum mansit humilis, fratrumque simillimus aliorum, ut ventilare cum eis et triturare, oves vitulasque mulgere, in pistrino, in horto, in cunctis monasterii operibus jocundus et obediens gauderet exerceri. . . . Nequi vellet limpidissimam vultus ejus lucem nubilo sibi suæ inquietudinis abscondere. . . . Vel aratri gressum stiva regendo, vel ferrum malleo domando, vel ventilabrum manu concutiendo."—*Vitæ Abbatum*, c. 7.

[2] "Sub divo residens, accitis ad se fratribus cunctis, more naturæ misericordis osculum pacis eis flentibus et de abscessu tanti patris et pastoris mœrentibus dedit."

When Benedict returned from his last expedition to Rome, he found his benefactor and protector, King Egfrid, and his nephew and coadjutor, Easterwine, both dead, along with a great number of his monks, carried off by one of the epidemics then so frequent. The only survivors at Yarrow were the abbot, and one little scholar whom we shall find again further on, and whose fame was destined to eclipse that of all the Saxon saints and kings, who are scarcely known to posterity except by his pen.[1] Benedict did not lose courage, but promptly collected new subjects under his sway, recommencing and pursuing, with his habitual energy, the decoration of his two Churches of St Peter and St Paul.[2] The monks had already chosen as successor to Easterwine a deacon named Sigfried, a learned and virtuous man, but affected by pulmonary disease, and the first of the English, I think, in whom his-

[1] This pupil is generally thought to be no other than the venerable Bede, who relates the touching incident in the following words: "Omnes qui legere, vel prædicare, vel antiphonas ac responsaria dicere possunt ablati sunt, excepto ipso abbate et uno puerulo, qui ab ipso nutritus ac eruditus, nunc usque in eo monasterio presbyterii gradum tenens, jure actus ejus laudabiles cunctis scire volentibus et scripto commandat et fatis."—*Append.*, p. 421. He describes further on how the abbot and his pupil celebrated, alone and in great sadness, the whole psalms of the monastic service, *non parvo cum labore*, until new monks arrived.

[2] A fine engraving by Hollar, republished in Mr Jamieson's *Monastic Legends*, represents him standing, dressed in pontifical robes; in the background are the two beautiful Monasteries of St Peter and St Paul, and the Tyne flowing between them—an arrangement not geographically exact, but which answers to the intention of reproducing on the Northumbrian coast the Basilicas of St Peter and St Paul on the two opposite banks of the Tiber at Rome.

tory indicates a malady so general and so fatal to their race.[1]

His last illness and exhortations.

Benedict's own turn was, however, soon to come. God preserved his life to purify him, and put his patience to a long and cruel trial, before calling him to his eternal recompense. After having devoted the first thirteen years of his abbatiate to the laborious and wandering life that was so dear to him, and to those distant expeditions that produced so many fruits for his order and his country, he was stricken by a cruel disease, which lasted for three years, and paralysed all his members one after the other. Though kept to his bed by this infirmity, and unable to follow his brethren to the choir, he notwithstanding continued to celebrate each service, both day and night, with certain of the monks, mingling his feeble voice with theirs. At night his sleepless hours were consoled by the reading of the Gospels, which was kept up without interruption by a succession of priests. Often, too, he collected the monks and novices round his couch, addressing to them urgent and solemn counsels, and among other things begging them to preserve the great library which he had brought from Rome, and not to allow it to be spoiled or dispersed; but above all to keep faithfully the rules which, after a careful study of the seventeen principal monasteries which he had visited during his numerous

[1] "Nocivo et irremediabili pulmonum vitio laborantem." — *Vitæ Abbat.*, c. 8.

journeys beyond seas, he had given to them.[1] He also dwelt much upon the injunction he had already often repeated, that they should pay no regard to high birth in their choice of an abbot, but look simply to his life and doctrine. He prayed them to elect to this office the most worthy among themselves, in conformity to the rules of St Benedict and the charter he had obtained for them. "If I had to choose between two evils, I should prefer," he said to them, "to see the spot on which I have established our dear monastery fall back into eternal solitude, rather than to be succeeded here by my own brother, who, we all know, is not in the good way."[2] Thus Benedict shows himself to have been moved by a presentiment of one of the most cruel dangers and fatal weaknesses with which the future of the monastic order could be threatened.

The strength of the holy abbot, and, at the same

[1] "Evangelium tota nocte pro doloris levamine, quod et aliis noctibus fieri consueverat. . . . Ex decem quippe et septem monasteriis quæ inter longos meæ crebræ peregrinationis discursus optima comperi, hæc universa didici, et vobis salubriter observanda contradidi."—BEDE, *Vitæ Abbat.*, c. 8. Lingard (i. 208) believes from this passage that the rule of St Benedict was only partially followed at Wearmouth; but it evidently refers only to those special regulations and laws which have been always made use of in all abbeys or congregations of abbeys, to develop and complete the fundamental rule. That this rule was known and followed in the Northumbrian monasteries, is plain from the exhortation of Benedict Biscop to his monks regarding their choice of a successor, in which he enjoins them to proceed "juxta quod regula magni quondam abbatis Benedicti, juxta quod privilegii nostri continent decreta."—Cf. MABILLON, *Præfatio in Sæculum Benedictinum*, n. 88, 89.

[2] "Vere dico vobis quod . . . tolerabilius mihi multo est totum hunc locum in quo monasterium feci . . . in solitudinem sempiternam redigi quam ut frater meus carnalis . . . in eo regendo pro me abbatis nomine succedat."

Death of Benedict Biscop. 12th Jan. 690.

time, that of his poor coadjutor, was by this time so exhausted by their respective diseases, that they both perceived they were about to die, and desired to see each other for the last time before departing from this world. In order that the wish of these two tender friends should be accomplished, it was necessary to bring the dying coadjutor to the bed of the abbot. His head was placed on the same pillow; but they were both so feeble that they could not even embrace each other, and the help of brotherly hands was necessary to aid them.[1] All the monks assembled in chapter round this bed of suffering and love; and the two aged saints, having pointed out among them a successor approved by all, breathed together, with a short interval between, their last breath. Thus died, at the age of sixty-two, St Benedict of England, a worthy rival of the great patriarch of the monks of the West, whose robe and name he bore, being, like him, a victor over sin and master of all virtue.[2]

The government of the two monasteries, Wear-

The monk proposed by the two dying saints to the choice of their brethren, to replace them as abbot of the two monasteries, was the same Ceolfrid

[1] "Egfridus in feretro deportaretur ad cubiculum ubi Benedictus et ipse suo jacebat in grabato . . . caput utriusque in eodem cervicali locaretur . . . vel tantum habuere virium, ut propius posita ora ad osculandum se alterutrum conjungere possent, sed et hoc fraterno compleverunt officio."—*Vitæ Abbat.*, c. 10.

[2] "Vitiorum victor Benedictus et virtutum patrator egregius victus infirmitate carnis ad extrema pervenit. . . . Anima illa sancta longis flagellorum felicium excocta atque examinata flammis luteam carnis fornacem deserit."—*Ibid.*, c. 11. He died January 12, 690, at the age of sixty-two.

who had accompanied Benedict to Rome and to Canterbury, and who was already Abbot of Yarrow. Like all the chiefs of the great Northumbrian communities, with the exception of Cuthbert, he proceeded from the highest rank of Anglo-Saxon nobility. His father bore the dignity of *ealdorman*, the highest rank after the blood-royal, and was famed for his magnificence. On one occasion, when he expected a visit from the king, the news of the sudden incursion of some enemy obliged the prince to depart before beginning the magnificently prepared repast, upon which the earl assembled all the poor of the quarter, put them in the place of the king and his attendants, and, when they were all seated, served the men with his own hands, while his countess performed the same office for the women.

mouth and Yarrow, goes to Ceolfrid,

Ceolfrid, who became a monk at eighteen, had been trained at Ripon, in the school of Wilfrid, who ordained him priest after ten years of study.[1] After this, in order to understand better the traditions and obligations of his profession, he visited the monastic metropolis of Canterbury, and on his way

A disciple of Wilfrid,

[1] The elder brother of Ceolfrid had been Abbot of Gilling, the monastery founded by Queen Eanfleda to expiate her husband's crime in murdering the holy King Oswin ; afterwards preferring contemplation to an active life, he exiled himself to Ireland, and there spent the rest of his life in the study of Holy Scripture. He died, together with several other English nobles, of the plague. This is a fresh example of the frequent relations of the Anglo-Saxons with monastic Ireland. Ceolfrid commenced his career at Gilling, from whence he was summoned to Ripon with the whole community, by Wilfrid.

back spent some time with an old abbot named Botulph, whose virtues and knowledge were much renowned.[1] Botulph, too, was of a noble family of East Anglia;[2] his parents were among the oldest Christians of England, and had sent him while quite young across the sea into a monastery in Gaul, to learn, says his biographer, the glories of the faith, and to train himself to apostolical life. When he returned some years after, furnished with recommendations from two young East Anglian princesses whom he had met in his Gaulish monastery, he gained the heart of the kings of his tribe. These princes offered him lands which were already under cultivation, and were even allotted, according to feudal law, to other proprietors; but Botulph refused to have any one impoverished for his advantage, and preferred an uncultivated estate, situated on a little river not far from the Northern Sea,[3] where he founded the great Monastery of Icanhoe,

And of Botulph, the founder of Icanhoe.

About 654.

[1] "Ut videret instituta Botulfi abbatis quem . . . fama circumquaque vulgaverat."—*Histor. Abbatum*, in *Append.* BEDÆ, p. 417.

[2] *Ad Anglos Orientales*, says the Life of Ceolfrid just cited; and this designation does not contradict that of *Angli Australes*, used by the contemporary author of the Life of St Botulph, published by Mabillon (*Act. SS. O. S. B.*, sæc. iii. pars i. p. 3). The Angles of Mercia and East Anglia were in fact southerners in the eyes of the Angles of Northumbria. Besides, two of the kings named in the biography as sovereigns of Botulph's country, Adelher and Adelwold, figure among the East Anglian kings.—*See* LAPPENBERG, Genealogical Table E at the end of his first volume.

[3] "Ut ubi plenius addisceret et Sanctæ Fidei gloriam, et sanctæ conversationis in apostolicis institutionibus disciplinam. . . . Petit simpliciter, non ut aliquem regia violentia de hereditario jure caussa sui depellat, sed potius ut de incultis terris . . . sibi tantum concedat."—*Vita S. Botulfi*, c. 2 and 5.

which has since grown into a town, and has borrowed its modern name, Boston, from that of its founder (*Botulph's town*).[1] Botulph's chief aim was to build and regulate his monastery on the model of the communities where he had lived, or which he had visited on the Continent—that is to say, in strict conformity with the rule of St Benedict. He lived there for more than half a century, surrounded by the veneration and love of his countrymen, and working steadily to secure the complete observance of Benedictine laws in his community—a procedure which in the district where he had established himself did not fail to appear a grave innovation. The care which his biographer, a contemporary of his own, takes to set forth this distinctive feature, which ran through his whole life, makes it apparent that he had to contend with the resistance of his monks, and that he only succeeded by sometimes sacrificing his natural humility and his popularity to the austere duties of his abbatial charge. He repeated daily to his disciples the laws and lessons which he had brought from beyond sea; and even on his deathbed, during the attacks of sickness which consumed his old age, he never ceased to recall the recollections of his monastic journeys, and to boast the gentleness and beauty of the true rule.[2]

[1] Situated on the Witham, in Lincolnshire : the English town of Boston gave its name to the celebrated capital of Massachusetts, the fame and influence of which, in North America, have been always so considerable.

[2] "Imperitis vitæ regularis attulit normam, et in monasticis observa-

Imbued with the teaching of this great doctor of monastic life, Ceolfrid returned to Ripon, to redouble his zeal and fervour in the practice of his profession. When he became master of the novices at Ripon, the son of the ealdorman distinguished himself by his energy in all those manual labours, which must have been so repugnant to the pride and habits of the Anglo-Saxon nobles. Without giving up his priestly functions, he took charge of the bakehouse, and was daily to be found at the furnace occupied in cleaning or heating it, and in baking bread for the use of the house.[1] His fame reached the ears of Benedict Biscop, who, as soon as he began his enterprise, asked him from Wilfrid. His request was granted; and this is the sole evidence which exists in history of any link whatever between the celebrated Bishop of York and the great monasteries founded by the friend of his youth. After his transfer to Wearmouth, Ceolfrid was soon made the deputy, as prior, of Abbot Benedict, during his journeys. But he found among the new monks certain sons of nobles like himself, who refused to

tionibus magnus legislator antea incognitam docuit viam. . . . Ad instar monasteriorum ubi conversatus fuerat in partibus Galliæ cæptum opus perfecit. . . . Quod transmarinis partibus didicerat de monachorum districtiori vita et regulari consuetudine, memoriter repetendo quotidianis inculcationibus subditos consuescit. . . . Appropinquante vitæ termino de observandis regulis monasteriorum quæ peregrinus petierat, loqui et sæpius repetere dulce ac delectabiliter ducebat."—*Vita S. Botulfi*, c. 4, 7, 9, 10.

[1] "Pistorii officium tenens, inter cribrandum clibanumque accendendum mundandumque, et panes in eo coquendos, presbyteratus ceremonias sedulus discere simul et exercere non omisit."—*Append.*, p. 417.

be controlled by the severe discipline which he enforced upon them both by precept and example, and who pursued him with their murmurs and calumnies.[1] The effect of this upon him was such that, taking advantage of the absence of Benedict, he gave up his charge and returned to Ripon, to resume his former life there. Benedict hastened after him, and brought him back by dint of entreaties. After this he never relaxed his hold upon Ceolfrid, taking him with him in all his journeys up to the day when, as has been seen, he confided the government of the new Monastery of Yarrow to him whom he wished to make his inseparable companion and fellow-labourer.[2]

Ceolfrid took with him twenty-two monks from Wearmouth, to fill up the new foundation; but among these there were several who could not yet sing or even read aloud the service in the choir according to the requirements of the monastic ritual. Ceolfrid had to complete their musical and liturgical education, at the same time as he began that of the new-comers who soon thronged to Yarrow. By dint of entering himself into all the studies and exercises of his community, even in their minutest details, until the Benedictine observances took permanent root among them, he succeeded in his task. And he had to wield the trowel

[1] "Invidias quorundam nobilium, qui regularem ejus disciplinam ferre nequibant, insecutionesque patiebatur acerrimas."—*Append.*, p. 418.

[2] "Ipse illi comes individuus, cooperator et doctor regularis et monasticæ institutionis aderat."—*Vitæ*, c. 16.

as well as the crosier, in order to direct and complete in less than two years the construction of the new abbey church, in which King Egfrid himself fixed the situation of the great altar.[1]

Ceolfrid, when placed by the death of his friend at the head of the two Monasteries of Wearmouth and Yarrow, which then formed one community of six hundred monks,[2] displayed for twenty-seven years an unwearying activity and superior intelligence, as well as all the virtues of ascetic life. He was in every respect a worthy successor of Benedict: he took pains to enrich the two libraries, which were so great an object of care to his predecessor; and on occasion made use of his books for other purposes than the instruction of his monks. It is true that he had to deal with a learned king, trained at Iona, the enemy of Wilfrid and his Roman predilections, but as much a lover of books as any saint or monk, either Irish like Columba, or Anglo-Saxon like Biscop. The latter had brought from Rome a curious system of cosmography, which King Aldfrid burned to possess, and which he obtained from the Abbot Ceolfrid in exchange for land supporting eight families. The abbot afterwards found means of exchanging this estate, with the

The exchange of a book for an estate.

[1] "Sed juvet amor religionis et studiosi rectoris exemplum atque instantia sollers, qui donec illum observantiæ regularis radicem fieret, horis omnibus canonicis cum fratribus ecclesiam frequentare, refici et quiescere solebat."—*Append.*, p. 420.

[2] "Utrique monasterio, vel sicut rectius dicere possumus, in duobus locis posito uni monasterio. . . . Relictis in suis monasteriis fratribus numero ferme sexcentis."—*Vitæ Abbatum*, c. 12, 13.

addition of a sum of money, for another estate twice or three times as large, situated opposite the Monastery of Yarrow, to which belonged the precious book which was the occasion of a traffic so lucrative.[1] It must not be supposed from this that the great abbot was interested or mercenary; he had, on the contrary, retained in the cloister the generous habits of his noble race; and Bede expressly tells that he never received a present or donation from neighbouring lords without giving them, as soon as possible, an equivalent.[2]

Let us add, while speaking of books, that he had two complete copies made of the Bible, according to the version of St Jerome, which he had brought from Rome, and placed them in his two churches, that they might be read and consulted by all who wished to do so[3]—a new refutation, among so many others, of the stupid calumny which represents the Church as having in former

[1] "Bibliothecam utriusque monasterii . . . non minori germinavit industria. . . . Dato Cosmographorum codice mirandi operis . . . terram octo familiarum . . . ab Alfrido regi in Scripturis doctissimo . . . comparavit, quem comparandi ordinem ipse dum adhuc viveret, Benedictus . . . taxaverat, sed prius quam complere potuisset, obiit. . . . Verum pro hac terra postmodum, Osredo regnante, addito pretio digno, terram xx. familiarum . . . accepit."—*Vitæ*, c. 12.

[2] "A viris principalibus quibus cunctis erat honorabilis . . . hanc habens semper consuetudinem, ut si quis ei aliquid muneris offerret, hoc illi vel statim vel post intervallum competens, non minore gratia rependeret."—C. 13. It is evident that they were already, even in the most fervent and exemplary communities, far from a state of primitive poverty.

[3] "Totidem per duo sua monasteria posuit in ecclesiis, ut *cunctis*, qui aliquod capitulum de utrolibet Testamento legere voluissent, in promptu esset invenire quod cuperent."—*Vita Ceolfridi*, in *Append.* BEDÆ, *Op. Min.*, a. 325.

times interdicted to her children the knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures.

Ceolfrid's anxiety for the intellectual and material interests of his community did nowise diminish his zeal for the regular discipline and spiritual
700. independence of his brethren. He took pains to have the charter of immunity obtained from Agathon renewed by the Pope St Sergius, and confirmed in full synod by King Aldfrid. He devoted a considerable portion of each day, and his unwearying attention, to the prayers and sacred song of the choir; neither age nor sickness, nor even travel, seemed to him sufficient reasons for dispensing with this. Severe as it was his duty to be against the least irregularity, he lavished on the weak encouragements and consolations, and was hard only to himself, his living and clothing being of a temperance which seemed at that time surprising in the chief of so powerful an institution.[1]

642-716. When he had passed his seventieth year, he no longer found himself strong enough to give to his monks an example of life conformed to the rule; and he was anxious, besides, to return
He desires to die at Rome. before he died to Rome, where he had in his youth accompanied his friend and master, there to prepare himself for death in silence. In vain the monks, when informed of his design, threw themselves on

[1] "Acutus ingenio, actis impiger ... . per incomparabilem orandi psallendique sollertiam, qua ipse quotidianus exerceri non desiit . . . post insolitam rectoribus et escæ potusque parcitatem."

their knees to keep him back. Nothing could change his purpose. As soon as he had formed his resolution he put it in practice, fearing that if it were known he might be disturbed from without by entreaties, or even by the presents[1] of the friends he had among the nobility of the neighbourhood, and indeed of all Northumbria. Three days after having declared his decision to the afflicted community, he said mass in the morning very early, gave the communion to all present, and, standing on the steps of the altar with the censer in his hand, blessed all his children. They began to sing litanies, which were interrupted by tears and sobs ; Ceolfrid then led them to an oratory, which he had dedicated to the martyr St Lawrence, near the dormitory, and there addressed to them, as Benedict had done on his deathbed, a last exhortation. Its special subject was charity and mutual brotherly correction ; and he entreated all those who might have found him too hard to pardon him and pray for him. From thence he descended to the bank of the river which bathes the walls of the monastery, followed by the six hundred monks of the two communities ; after having received from their father a last kiss moistened with tears, they all knelt down. The old abbot then entered the ship that was to carry him away ; and from the deck, on which the cross had been reared between two

4th June 716.

[1] "Ne pecunia daretur ei a quibusdam, quibus retribuere pro tempore nequiret."

torches, he gave them his last benediction and disappeared from their sight.

Ceolfrid himself could not contain his grief at this parting; at the distant sound of the chants of his monks, broken by their sobs, his tears flowed. Again and again he was heard to say, "Christ, my Lord and my God, have pity on this worthy and numerous company. Protect these dear children. I am sure that better or more obedient are nowhere to be found."[1]

When they re-entered the monastery, the monks proceeded on the spot to the election of the new abbot. At the end of three days the universal suffrage of the two communities fixed upon a young man, trained at Wearmouth from his infancy, and worthy of his illustrious predecessors, in his zeal for study, song, and teaching, as their united chief. As soon as he was elected, the new abbot rushed after Ceolfrid, and found him in the port waiting a favourable wind for crossing to the Continent. He gave him a letter to the Pope, from which we quote the following passages :—

[1] "Omnibus in lacrymas singultusque genua cum obsecratione crebra flectentibus. . . . Cantata ergo primo mane missa . . . conveniunt omnes . . . pacem dat omnibus, thuribulum habens in manu: tunc fletibus universorum inter Letanias resonantibus, exeunt . . . veniunt ad littus, rursum osculo pacis inter lacrymas omnibus dato, genua flectunt . . . ascendit navem . . . transit flumen, adorat crucem, ascendit equum et abiit."—C. 13. "Audiensque sonum mixti cum luctu carminis, nullatenus valuit ipse a singultu et lacrymis temperare. Hoc autem solum crebra voce repetiit: Christe Deus, miserere illi cœtui . . . protege illam cohortem . . . scio certissime quia nullos unquam meliores illis et promptiores ad obedientiam novi."—*Append.*, p. 425.

"To the blessed Pope Gregory II., our dear lord in the Lord of lords, Huetberct, your humble servant, Abbot of the Monastery of St Peter, prince of the apostles, among the Saxons, everlasting greeting.—In the name of all my brethren, united in this place with me to find rest for their souls and to bear the sweet yoke of Christ, we recommend to your dear and holy kindness the hoary hairs of our venerable and beloved father, the Abbot Ceolfrid, who has ruled, trained, fed, and defended us in monastic peace and freedom. He has torn himself from us in the midst of our lamentations, tears, and sorrow; but we thank the holy and invisible Trinity that it has been given him to attain to the blessed joy of rest which he has so long desired. He returns in his extreme old age to the tombs of the apostles, his visits to which in youth he has always remembered with enthusiasm. After forty years of work and care in his monastic government, he shows himself as much inspired by the love of virtue as though he were still in the first freshness of his conversion; and on the threshold of death, bent under the weight of age, he again becomes a pilgrim for Christ. We conjure your Paternity, render to this beloved father those last duties of filial piety which it will not be permitted to us to accomplish. Afterwards you will keep his body; but his soul will remain with us both—with us and with you; and after his death, as during

his life, we shall find in him a friend, a protector, and intercessor with God."[1]

The wishes of the double community of Wearmouth and Yarrow, thus expressed with so much filial affection, were not fulfilled. Ceolfrid never reached Rome; the fatigues of the journey aggravated the weakness of his old age. He took three months to travel from Northumbria to the frontiers of Burgundy. During these three months he did not cease for a single day to celebrate mass and sing the entire monastic service, even when his weakness prevented him from moving except in a litter.[2] He was able to travel only as far as Langres, where he died at the age of seventy-four—forty-three years of his age having been consecrated to the work of training or governing souls in the cloister. He was buried in a monastery, afterwards known by the name of St Geosmes, and which

25th Sept. 711.

[1] "Eligitur Huætberctus . . . scribendi, cantandi, legendi ac docendi non parva exercitatus industria . . . electus abbas ab omnibus utriusque monasterii fratribus. . . . Una cum sanctis fratribus qui mecum in his locis ad inveniendam requiem animabus suis suavissimum Christi jugum portare desiderant. . . . Commendamus . . . venerabiles patris nostri dilectissimi canos . . . nutritoris tutorisque nostræ spiritualis in monastica quiete libertatis et pacis. . . . Ad suæ tamen diu desideratæ quietis gaudia sancta pervenit . . . dum ea quæ juvenem se adiisse atque adorasse semper recordans exultabat . . . repetiit . . . prope jam moriturus, rursus incipit peregrinari pro Christo. . . . Supplicamus ut quod nos facere non meruimus, vos erga illum ultimæ pietatis munus seduli expleatis."—*Vitæ Abbatum*, c. 14.

[2] "Per dies cxiv., exceptis canonicis horis quotidie bis psalterium ex ordine decantare curavit, etiam cum ad hoc per infirmitatem deveniret, ut equitare non valens feretro caballario veheretur, quotidie missa cantata salutaris hostiæ Deo munus offerret, excepto uno, quo oceanum navigabat, et tribus ante exitum diebus."

took that name from the twins who, along with their grandmother, St Leonilla, were martyred there under the Cæsars.[1] His austere life did not prevent him from travelling with all the retinue of a great personage, as indeed the abbot of the greatest community of the Anglo-Saxons of the North already was. Of the eighty English who composed his suite some continued their pilgrimage to Rome, others returned to England, and some preferred to pass the rest of their lives in the midst of a people whose language they did not understand, rather than separate themselves from the tomb of a father to whom they clung with an unchangeable love.[2]

I beg my readers to make an effort to represent to themselves who these eighty companions of old Ceolfrid were, and who also were, and from whence came, the six hundred Anglo-Saxons whom we have just seen kneeling on the sandy beach, on the shore of the Northern Sea, to receive the blessing of our aged abbot, going forth to brave the danger and fatigues of a laborious journey, with the hope of dying near the tomb of St Peter and St Paul. I would fain see the coldest and most bitter of sceptics transported for an instant in thought to

[1] Their names were Speusippus, Eleusippus, and Meleusippus. The mention of these martyrs leads me to point out in passing the singularly instructive and conclusive examination given to this history by M. l'Abbé Bougaud in his learned *Etude sur la Mission, les Actes, et le Culte de Saint Bénigne, Apôtre de la Bourgogne.* Dijon, 1859, p. 171, 172.

[2] "Partim ad tumbam defuncti inter eos quorum nec linguam noverant, pro inextinguibili patris affectus redere."—*Vitæ Abbatum*, c. 15.

that far distant shore. I should accompany him willingly, with no intermediary between him and me except simple good faith.

We should then find ourselves in the eighth century, in all its darkness, in all its barbarism, in an island destined to become again and again the prey of bloody and atrocious invasions. These are the sons of pirates, of incendiaries, of ravagers and murderers, who surround us. Yet see what they have become! Not all, certainly, but the first and most powerful, those in whom the abuse of strength, victory, and wealth would have produced most scandal and excess. See what the Christian religion has made of those wild hearts; look at the flowers which have blossomed by its means in that soil watered with blood and horror. Behold its fruits, its victories, its conquests, its chief spoil. Religion has established herself on that desolated land, amid these pitiless conquerors. She has shown them peace, gentleness, labour, virtue, truth, light, heaven; and after having thus lavished upon them a treasury of new thoughts, beliefs, and strength, new food for their intelligence, and unknown resources for their social order, she has taught them to love, to love one another, to love souls—and to imprint the recollection of that love upon scenes and words which cannot deceive and will not be forgotten.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX.

I.

LINDISFARNE.

(See page 19.)

LINDISFARNE at present bears the name of *Holy Island*, which was given it in 1093 by the monks, then transferred to Durham, in memory of the number of monks who were massacred at the Danish invasion, and venerated as martyrs.

Except the dark and scarcely visible island, situated on the south-west, fifty fathoms from the shore, which is still called St Cuthbert's Isle, and where it is said some remains of his cell are to be seen, the Holy Island of Lindisfarne retains no material trace either of the dwelling-place of the great and popular saint, or of the ancient monastic cathedral of Northumberland. But it possesses the important and very picturesque ruins of the church, rebuilt in 1093 by Bishop Carilef. This bishop immortalised himself by the construction of the magnificent Cathedral of Durham, of which the church of Lindisfarne, built of fine red stone like the churches on the Rhine, is a dependence. It is in the Roman or purest Norman

style, except the choir and its rectangular heading, which were added in the thirteenth century. Its architect was the monk Eadward, so much praised by Reginald in his *Libellus de Miraculis Cuthberti*, and who brought from the neighbouring city, with the eager aid of the inhabitants, the good stone which was wanting at Lindisfarne, that of the island being too friable, and apt to be destroyed by the sea-spray. A double diagonal arch, ornamented with rich toothed mouldings, is the only remaining relic of the central vault of the transept, between the nave and choir. This arch, thrown from the north-western to the south-eastern corner, with the appearance of being suspended in the air, traces its outline upon the sky with boldness and majesty. It is four-and-twenty English feet in diameter, and rises to a height of forty-four feet above the ground, which is itself heightened by ruins. The lower side of the north is still entire, as well as two bays of the same side of the nave, which was composed of six. The ancient choir ended in a circular apse; the half of it remains, disfigured and mutilated by a square heading in materials different from the rest. The transept has two circular apses, in the same style as the choir. The reverse of the western front, in the interior of the church, has a fine effect. The entire ruin is very well rendered in the *Architectural Antiquities of Durham*, by Billings.

Some remains of the ancient monastery are still to be seen round the church. A fine fortress of the sixteenth century, built under Queen Elizabeth, occupies a conical mole at the southern extremity of the island.

A very minute description of Lindisfarne is to be found in the work of the learned James Raine, entitled *The History and Antiquities of North Durham*, or the shires of Norham, Island, and Bedlington, now united in the county of Northumberland: London, 1852. The article

Holy Island is very long: it goes into minute details of the priory founded there in 1095, and is accompanied by an engraving made in 1728 by Buck, and which shows the state of the ruins at that period: they do not seem to have been more considerable then than at present.

Bamborough, the ancient residence of the kings of Northumbria, situated on the shore in sight of Lindisfarne, is placed on an immense rock, which commands the sea and all the surrounding country: the castle, much modernised, has been made by Lord Crewe into a charitable school and various establishments devoted to the work of salvage, which is so necessary and so energetically directed upon that dangerous coast.

I cannot resist the temptation of quoting here Walter Scott's fine lines, which will console the reader for the dryness of the preceding details, and which exactly depict the site of Lindisfarne, except in respect to the grandeur of the ruins: the English are disposed to exaggerate the effect of the size of their historical monuments, which are almost always less than our own.

"And now the vessel skirts the strand
Of mountainous Northumberland.
. . . . .
Thy tower, proud Bamborough, marked they there,
King Ida's castle, huge and square,
From its tall rock look grimly down,
And on the swelling ocean frown;
Then from the coast they bore away,
And reached the Holy Island's bay.
The tide did now its flood-mark gain,
And girdled in the Saint's domain:
For, with the flow and ebb, its style
Varies from continent to isle;
Dry-shod, o'er sands, twice every day,
The pilgrims to the shrine find way;
Twice every day the waves efface
Of staves and sandalled feet the trace.
As to the port the galley flew,
Higher and higher rose to view

The castle with its battled walls,
The ancient monastery's halls,
A solemn, huge, and dark-red pile,
Placed on the margin of the isle.
In Saxon strength that Abbey frowned,
With massive arches broad and round,
That rose alternate, row and row,
On ponderous columns, short and low,
Built ere the art was known,
By pointed aisle, and shafted stalk,
The arcades of an alley walk
To emulate in stone.
On the deep walls, the heathen Dane
Had poured his impious rage in vain;
And needful was such strength to these,
Exposed to the tempestuous seas,
Scourged by the winds' eternal sway,
Open to rovers fierce as they,
Which could twelve hundred years withstand
Winds, waves, and northern pirates' hand.
Not but that portions of the pile,
Rebuilded in a later style,
Showed where the spoiler's hand had been;
Not but the wasting sea-breeze keen
Had worn the pillar's carving quaint,
And mouldered in his niche the saint,
And rounded, with consuming power,
The pointed angles of each tower;
Yet still entire the Abbey stood,
Like veteran, worn, but unsubdued."

—*Marmion*, cant. ii.

II.

PETERBOROUGH.

(See page 179.)

This celebrated monastery has been the origin of an important town in Northamptonshire, which sends two members to the House of Commons, and was made into a bishopric of the Anglican Church by Henry VIII. The

last abbot became bishop in 1541, and the abbey church was transformed into the cathedral of the new bishopric —an arrangement which still continues.

Peterborough was built on an isle in the marshy district which, at the time of the Saxon occupation, included a considerable portion of the existing counties of Northampton, Cambridge, Lincoln, and Norfolk, and which is still known as *the Fens*. There existed in these marshes some spots more solid, which could even be made into pasturage, and the industry of the monks soon brought them under cultivation. From this is derived the primitive name of Peterborough, *Medehamstede*, or, in modern English, *the Home in the Meadows*. Such was also the origin of the still celebrated abbeys of Ely and Croyland, and of several others, Ramsey, Thorney, Kirkstead, &c. This district is now one of the most fertile parts of England.

There are no remains existing of the church of the monastery built in the seventh century by the kings of the Mercians. The Danes destroyed it at their great invasion in 870, after having slaughtered all the monks. It was rebuilt a century later, and again dedicated to St Peter by the famous Ethelwold, Bishop of Winchester, but afterwards destroyed by accidental fires in 1067 and in 1116. It was in 1118, after the last of these fires, that the present building was commenced by the abbot John of Seez : the choir was consecrated in 1143, and the chapels, to the east of the transept, from 1133 to 1145, under a very distinguished abbot, Martin du Bec. The existing nave, begun in 1155, was not finished till towards 1190. The aisles of the nave date from 1117 and 1143.

Like all English cathedrals, Peterborough has preserved its vast dependencies, and stands in the midst of gardens, flowery lawns, and groves, which heighten its grandeur

and beauty. The tranquil majesty of the close which surrounds it naturally recalls to mind its monastic origin; the silence and serenity which reign there are scarcely disturbed, except by the flight or the song of birds, whose nests are built in the towers and buttresses of the immense church. The great and numerous buildings which shut in this close seem to reproduce, in part at least, the cloisters of the great abbey before its secularisation. The entrance from the town into the sacred enclosure is by a gateway, in the form of a square tower, pierced by an arched passage, and surmounted by a chapel dedicated to St Nicholas, but used at present as a music school. To the left is another chapel, dedicated to St Thomas-à-Becket, which serves for the use of the choristers. Beyond this gateway is the spacious enclosure surrounding the church; to the right and to the south is the old abbatial palace—now the bishop's—built in 1319, its grand entrance flanked by two statues, larger than life, of an abbot and a monk. To the left and north is the deanery, a fine building of the date of 1518. But the eyes of visitors are at once attracted and enchanted by the magnificent western façade of the abbey church. This façade, built between 1200 and 1227, in the early ogival style, called in England *Early English*, is equally original and splendid; it is said, not without reason, to have no equal among the specimens of Christian architecture. It is composed of three porches or ogival doorways, equal in height, which occupy the whole elevation of the façade; they are surmounted by three triangular gables or frontals, and flanked north and south by two square towers of great elegance, with spires. The depth of these doorways is as astonishing as their height; the sides of the inner walls and the whole of the façade are lavishly enriched with sculpture, and decorated wherever it is possible with bays and roses in the finest style.

The whole effect is truly wonderful, thanks to the immense dimensions of this triple porch and the masses of light and shade caused by the depths of the arches.

The two façades of the grand transept, to the north and south, flanked by polygonal turrets, and of Roman or Norman architecture, are also extremely beautiful. Nothing can be finer than the north façade with its seven tiers of arches and vaulted bays. This façade is, externally, the best preserved and most interesting part of the ancient Norman church, which is there seen without the disfigurement of those additions in the perpendicular or flamboyant style which have been made to the aisles of the nave, the mullions of the triforium, the circumference of the choir, and even in certain parts of the great western façade.

The circular apse of the primitive church may also be seen rising above the quadrilateral oblong which was added in the sixteenth century, and in spite of the disparity caused by the flamboyant architecture of the great windows of this apse, its effect is still remarkable. Besides the great transept, situated between the choir and the nave, there is another of smaller dimensions situated between the nave and the western façade, and flanked by four turrets, two with battlemented terraces, and two with spires, already mentioned in reference to the principal façade. It has also a central tower, which is low and ungraceful, and which, moreover, is decorated at the four corners with those hideous bell towers which disfigure a large proportion of English steeples.

Peterborough Cathedral thus possesses a great number of towers and turrets, but their want of height diminishes their effect; and this is the case also with the whole of the roof, which, as in most English cathedrals, is so low as to wound the eye by the absence of that perfect proportion

between the height and length of the building to which we are accustomed in those of France and Germany.

But whatever may be wanting to the exterior of Peterborough is fully compensated by the majestic and solemn beauty of the interior. I remember no church in the world whose whole aspect is, at the first glance, more striking. Every detail appears to be of the purest Roman or Norman art. And it is so especially in the central nave, which is of extraordinary length,[1] with eleven bays (Notre Dame in Paris has only seven) divided by huge columns alternately round and octangular. The roof, instead of being vaulted, has a ceiling of wood, believed to be of the same date as the edifice, and covered with old paintings, recalling those lately restored with such success in the Church of St Godehard at Hildesheim. The triforium, of which each bay is composed only of a pointed arch, is of a grand simplicity, and neutralises the unfortunate effect of the flamboyant windows of the clerestory, the pointed bays of which are besides even lower than those of the triforium.

The aisles of the nave are in the same style, but with vaulted roofs in stone; their inner walls are entirely covered with vaulted and interlaced arches: unfortunately the windows of these aisles have been modernised in the sixteenth or seventeenth century.

The grand transept is also in the finest Norman style, and rivals the nave in size and magnificence; it has four bays in each arm, and six of these bays open on six chapels arranged parallel to the choir, in the manner of the Cistercian churches. The two façades of this transept, to the north and south, are pierced with three rows of vaulted bays, with mullions and trefoils.

[1] It is 266 English feet in length, 35 wide, and 85 high. The total length of the church is 479 feet: the western façade is 156. The lantern of the central tower is only 135 feet high.

The choir has four bays, and ends in an apse in four parts. But this apse itself is imbedded in a vast oblong construction much lower than the rest of the church. Here we find again the unpleasing fashion of finishing the finest churches with a parallelogram, to which English architects have always had a leaning, and which gives to their buildings a character so inferior to ours. This addition, called the Lady Chapel, was built in 1496. It has a richly sculptured vault of the special form of the English buildings of that period, such as may be seen at King's College, Cambridge, and at Henry VII.'s Chapel at Westminster.

Within the choir is the oldest monument in the church, that of Abbot Hedda, massacred by the Danes in 870. It is in the form of a shrine, with statues of our Lord and the twelve apostles in bas-relief. It is attributed to Goodric, who was abbot from 1099 to 1103.

A little further on may be seen the gravestone, scarcely visible, of Catherine of Arragon, the first wife of Henry VIII., and opposite the place where the body of Mary Stuart was buried after her execution at the neighbouring Castle of Fotheringay, and where it remained until her son James I. removed it to Westminster. These two great victims to the Reformation thus slept together in the old abbatial church of Peterborough, while the wicked and sanguinary Elizabeth finished her triumphal reign in peace.

This beautiful church cannot give us an idea of the buildings of Anglo-Saxon times; but it represents in all their majesty the great constructions of one of the greatest epochs of monastic history, that of the twelfth century, the era of St Bernard and Peter the Venerable.[1]

[1] An abridged history of this great monastery may be found in the biographical notes on its abbots, published by Stevens, *Continuation of*

I reserve for another volume my notes on the present state of two other monasteries, Croyland and Ely, which, from their commencement, were reckoned among the most celebrated in England, but the great splendour of which was later than the epoch of which I have hitherto spoken.

July 1862.

III.

HEXHAM.

(See page 231.)

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHURCH BUILT AT THE MONASTERY OF HEXHAM BY ST WILFRID FROM 674 TO 680.

"Igitur profunditatem ipsius ecclesiæ criptis et oratoriis subterraneis, et viarum anfractibus inferius cum magna industria fundavit.

"Parietes autem quadratis et bene politis columpnis suffultos et tribus tabulatis distinctos, immensæ longitudinis et altitudinis, erexit. Ipsos etiam et capitella columpnarum quibus sustentantur et arcum sanctuarii, historiis et ymaginibus et variis cœlaturarum figuris ex lapide prominentibus et picturarum et colorum grata varietate mirabilique decore decoravit. Ipsum quoque corpus ecclesiæ appentitiis et porticibus nardique circumdixit quæ, miro atque inexplicabili artificio, per parietes et cocleas inferius

Dugdale; London, 1722, vol. i. p. 496. I take this occasion of recommending to all lovers of Christian antiquities this excellent work, full of curious information and of zeal against the sacrilegious profaners of the Catholic monuments and institutions of England.

et superius distinxit. In ipsis vero cocleis,[1] et super ipsas, ascensoria ex lapide, et deambulatoria, et varios viarum amfractus, modo sursum, modo deorsum, artificiosissime ita machinari fecit, ut innumera hominum multitudo ibi existere et ipsum corpus ecclesiæ circumdare possit, cum a nemine tamen infra in eo existentium videri queat. Oratoriaque quam plurima, superius et inferius, secretissima et pulcherrima, in ipsis porticibus cum maxima diligentia et cautela constituit, in quibus altaria in honore Beatæ Dei genitricis semperque Virginis Mariæ, et sancti Michaelis Archangeli, sanctique Johanis Baptistæ et sanctorum Apostolorum, Martyrum, Confessorum, atque Virginum, cum eorum apparatibus, honestissime præparari fecit. Unde etiam, usque hodie, quædam illorum ut turres et propugnacula, supereminent. Atrium quoque templi magnæ spissitudinis et fortitudinis muro circumvallavit. Præter quem in alveo lapideo aquæductus, ad usus officinorum, per mediam villam decurrebat." [2]

[1] Ducange, at the word *Cochlea*, says: "Cochleæ sunt altæ et rotundæ turres, et dictæ cochleæ quasi cycleæ, quod in eis, tanquam per circulum orbemque, conscendatur."

[2] Richardi Prioris *Historia Hagulstadensis Ecclesiæ*, c. iii., ap. Twysden, *Historiæ Anglicanæ Scriptores Decem*, and Raine's *Priory of Hexham*, p. 11.

END OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.

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GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE KINGS OF NORTHUMBRIA.

BERNICIAN DYNASTY.

IDA, THE MAN OF FIRE,
Ninth in descent from Odin,
547-559.

- Ethelric.
  - ETHELFRID, THE RAVAGER, 592-617, m. *Acha*, daughter of Ella.
    - EANFRID, 633-634.
    - OSWALD, 635-642, m. *Kineburga* of Wessex.
      - ETHELWALD, provincial king in Deira.
        - ALCHFRID, associated with his father in the kingdom 658, m. the daughter of Penda, King of Mercia.
        - *Alchfleda*, m. Peada, son of Penda, King of Mercia.
        - EGFRID, 670-685, m. 1st, *St Etheldreda*, afterwards Abbess of Ely; 2d, *Ermenburga*, a nun after her widowhood
        - Alfwin, killed in 675.
        - ALDFRID, 685-705, m. *St Cuthburga*, afterwards Abbess of Winbourne.
          - OSRED, 705-716.
          - OSRIC, 718-729.
        - *Elfleda*, 654, d. 715, Abbess of Whitby after Hilda.
        - *Osthrida*, d. 697, m. Ethelred, King of Mercia.
    - OSWY, 642-670, m. *Eanfleda*, daughter of Edwin.
    - *St Ebba*, d. 684, Abbess of Coldingham.
- Eadric.
- Occa.

DEIRIAN DYNASTY.

Yffi,
Tenth in descent from Odin.

- ELLA, 559-588.
  - N. N.
    - Hereric, d. 616, m. *Bregeswida*.
  - EDWIN, 616-633, m. St Ethelburga of Kent.
    1. Osfrid, killed with his father.
    2. Edfrid, killed after his father.
    3. *Eanfleda*, born 626, wife of Oswy, King of Bernicia, afterwards a nun at Whitby under her daughter.
       - *St Hilda*, b. 614, d. 680, Abbess of Whitby.
       - *Hereswitha*, m. a King of E. Anglia (Anna or Edelher).
         - *St Etheldreda*, m. 659, King Egfrid, of Bernicia, Abbess of Ely, d. 679.
         - *St Sexburga*, Queen of Kent, Abbess of Ely after her sister
         - Aldulf, King of Mercia, 663-713.
           - *Edburga*, Abbess of Repton.
  - *Acha*, m. Ethelfrid, the Ravager.
- Elfric.
  - OSRIC, 633-634.
    - OSWIN, 645-651. martyr.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE KINGS OF NORTHUMBRIA AT THIS PERIOD.

547. Ida.
559. Ella.
592. Ethelfrid.
616. Edwin.
633. Osric and Eanfrid.
635. Oswald.
642. Oswy and Oswin.
651. Oswy alone.
670. Egfrid.
685. Aldfrid.
705. Osred.
716. Ceonred, son of Occa, son of Ida the Burner.
718. Osric, brother of Osred.
729. Ceolwulf, brother of Ceonred.
737. Eadbert, descended from Eadric, another son of Ida, and brother of Archbishop Egbert, the correspondent of Bede.

The names in capitals are the names of kings who reigned over Northumbria.
The dates placed after these names show the beginning and close of their reign.
The names in italics are those of queens and princesses.

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